UNCONQUERED SOULS:

The History of the African American In Ypsilanti

by Albert P. Marshall

MARLAN Publishers

Ypsilanti, Michigan

1993

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To Peter & Nan
Best Wishes
A. P. Marshall
Aug 28, 1993

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First Edition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword v

Preface viii

Introduction xi

Elected African American Officials xvi

Chapter One "In the Beginning" 1

Chapter Two "Give Us the Ballot" 12

Chapter Three "The Railroad: A Way to Freedom" 17

Chapter Four "Target: Freedom" 31

Chapter Five "To Preserve the Union... and Free the Slaves" 44

Chapter Six "The Changing Tide" 47

Chapter Seven "Settling In With Freedom" 56

Chapter Eight "Dreams Deferred" 65

Chapter Nine "A Gradual Awakening" 77

Chapter Ten "Let Us Enjoy Ourselves" 82

Chapter Eleven "Half-Century Celebration: 1915" 99

Chapter Twelve "Noteworthy Individuals: Early 1900s" 114

Chapter Thirteen "At the Seat of Power: African Americans in Government" 148

Index 161

FOREWORD

The Willow Run Bomber Plant was completed in September, 1942, to assemble the famed B-24 Liberator Bomber to support the war effort in Europe and Asia. Fifty thousand skilled and unskilled workers completed 8500 bombers between 1943 and June 30, 1945 when production ceased. The war effort sparked many other factories in Ypsilanti and surrounding towns, and almost everyone who was willing to move here was sure of finding a good paying job. Thousands of trailers and other temporary housing sprang up almost overnight. Churches, schools, and necessary businesses developed rapidly in the new community. As in any rapidly developed area many problems occur, and Ypsilanti was no exception.

My family moved here in 1940, and our first residence was on Jefferson Street, on the South Side. We found that most African Americans lived in the area bound by Huron on the east, Michigan Avenue on the north, and undeveloped areas on the south and the west. There was a great deal of racial prejudice, and as black citizens we were not welcome in many restaurants, churches, and certain business establishments. Sometimes suits and dresses were purchased without benefit of trying them on. To get around the humiliating attitudes which caused such practices we built our own barber shops, restaurants, churches, bars, drug stores, pool halls, clothing stores, beauty shops, and other such businesses. Harriet Street became the "downtown" for those of us living on the South Side. We discovered that there were many entrepreneurs among us, and we were more proud at that time than any other before or since.

Like many other experiences reflected in history, these times and events will soon be forgotten. Later generations will not know the prices paid to advance them to where they will be. They will not see black business men and women experiencing the indignities of unfair treatment in the marketplace. Most of the old businesses are gone, made obsolete when legal segregation was struck down.

I met A. P. and Ruthe Marshall in 1969 when they moved to Ypsilanti from Jefferson City, Missouri. Marshall had been appointed Library Director at Eastern Michigan University. I remember how proud we were that "one of our own" had been given this position. We became good friends from the very first time we met. The Marshalls very quickly became leaders in our city and our community, and soon gained the admiration and respect of all of us. They brought with them a concern for people and their many assets, particularly their historical backgrounds. Not long after we met, A. P. related to me his plans to write a historical account of the many roles played by blacks in the development of Ypsilanti. From his childhood he had acquired a wide knowledge of the contributions of African Americans to the nation, so it was not unusual that he was attracted by the rich heritage of this area. We had many discussions about the subject over the years, and I was amazed at the wealth of information he had accumulated. There were so many great contributions and accomplishments by black people that I developed an extreme pride. A. P. has done all of us a great service by making us aware of the obstacles faced by our forefathers and the progress they were able to make inspite of them. We are still faced with many challenges, and over the years we have lost some of what we gained. The lesson to be learned by reading this book is that there was a time, many generations ago, when our foreparents came to Ypsilanti and worked side by side with other citizens to make our city what it is today. They did not always receive credit for their contributions, but nevertheless, they were theirs. And because we now know this, we can be even more proud than ever.

John W. Barfield
January 5, 1993

PREFACE

Though the major impetus for this study came from a casual reading of Harvey C. Colburn's The Story of Ypsilanti (1923), the financial support of the Michigan Council for the Humanities created a real obligation to put my findings in writing. That was a dozen years ago, and information continued to build over the years.

The Ypsilanti Historical Museum has been a constant source of encouragement, both through the materials made available to me and the knowledge imparted by members of the staff. I owe much to the late Foster Fletcher who was often referred to as a "walking source of information" on the city's rich history and culture. I must not overlook the guidance of Moses Bass, Jr., Nina Kersey Williams, Laura Henry, Hubel Freeman, and Charles E. Beatty, Sr.

At the Ypsilanti Historical Museum there are over 50 reels of interviews with many persons, each of whom shed some light on Ypsilanti's reactions to the force of events over which they had little or no control.

Other important sources were the rich collections at the Bentley Historical Library in Ann Arbor, the Burton Collection at the Detroit Public Library, the Library of the University of Michigan, and the Library of Eastern Michigan University.

Certainly the support and encouragement of my wife, Ruthe, and my daughter, Satia M. Orange was indispensable. As a matter of fact, it was my wife who recognized my periods of procrastination, which were many, and prodded me into action. She also served in the important role of proofer, aided briefly by Mary Hatter. The editors of The Ypsilanti Press supplied several pictures, along with encouragement.

A major supporter of the project to get this material to the public has been John W. Barfield, without which this book would possibly be delayed even further.

I must accept full responsibility for any errors of fact or interpretation of events which may appear herein. I do hope that any comments will be passed on to me so that any further research and/or writings may reflect the corrections.

A. P. M.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
ALL AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO WITHSTOOD THE CRUEL
AND HUMILIATING EXPERIENCES OF EARLY DAYS
SO THAT I, AND OTHERS LIKE ME, COULD
BEGIN TO REALIZE THE AMERICAN DREAM.

INTRODUCTION

Localities, like individuals, are unique personalities. Ypsilanti is one example.

Molded from the combined experiences and aspirations of all those whose lives helped to make Ypsilanti what it is, the place has a character all its own. Those who know and understand the forces of the past, are usually concerned with the transfer of the best ideals to their progeny.

The history of African Americans in Ypsilanti, from early village days to current times, is woven into the fabric of local culture. Over the 165 years since settlement, the fundamental concerns of the founders about the work ethic, freedom of religion, and especially their attitudes about people, influenced the building of the place we now call home.

The occasional visits to the village of the Aray family of Pittsfield Township, the Richardsons and Carters of Whittaker and Augusta Township, and other dusky skinned settlers from surrounding places, whether for employment, shopping, or worship, had impact upon the attitudes and practices of citizens of the village.

When attitudes foreign to those held by inhabitants threatened the peace and mores of the village, conflicts arose, often resulting in drastic action. The cauldron from which future generations would seek to formulate their lives was thus kept active.

Though the first blacks to dwell in and

to impact upon the Ypsilanti community are thought to have arrived about 1840, there is evidence that a few were living in the village as early as 1830. The custom of rearing young black orphaned children in white families was not uncommon in the area and there were a few such instances in Ypsilanti. There was a black family living with a white family revealed in the Census of 1830.

By 1840, the comparatively liberal attitudes of the community had begun to entice free blacks who were actively searching for a place to build their lives. There were also a few escaped slaves who felt safe enough to settle here. The start of the first black religious congregation in the community in 1843 is evidence of a growing black presence. They were already accepted, or at the least tolerated, in established white churches, again revealing something of the developing environment. The start of a "colored" school in 1860 for the first three grades shows a recognition of a growing problem relating to the influx of young children who were too old to fit into the academic system. The citizens avoided establishing a wholly segregated pattern. The first three grades were viewed by the board as crucial to the academic survival of some students. Large numbers of poorly prepared students choked the system, and such an arrangement gave them a better chance at academic achievement.

Outside influences played their roles too. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 forbade slavery in the Territory. Though some communities totally ignored the law, those who settled Ypsilanti would never have been willing to tolerate the subjugation of any human being. So when emancipation became a fact, Ypsilanti was ready to accept ideas of complete freedom by welcoming any legal efforts to extend freedom. Actions by hate groups to stall the integration of blacks into the fabric of white society grew slowly in Ypsilanti.

The local environment seemed to encourage self development, even though African Americans, as they are now called, were still emerging into the world of true freedom. We now know that they were not quite ready to take on all the demands of an expanding society.

Meantime, those who had earlier been sympathetic to the plight of the former bondsmen were soon gone from the scene. New generations ignored the facts of previous conditions, expecting blacks to compete on equal bases with whites. The next generation did not relate to conditions which handicapped former bondsmen.

Thus a no-win situation was thrust upon the African American. A minimum of two to three generations would be necessary to build the kind of habits, philosophies, mores, and attitudes necessary to the success expected of a long suffering people.

Misunderstandings between the two groups quite naturally fueled animosities to which most blacks were unprepared to respond. The African American developed slowly under circumstances imposed upon him. The need for a disciplined mind, obtained through education and training, developed slowly.

Eventually the inheritance of ethical beliefs, and the concurrent absorption of the Judeo-Christian philosophy which prevailed in this culture, would change disadvantaged blacks into competing, well prepared citizens. The country's unique market economy began to appear to him as a way of life which could serve him well. In time many descendents of slavery would equal or surpass many of those with white skins.

Though Ypsilanti was never the ideal place for blacks to live, there was a kind of spirit of toleration which made life more bearable than in some other places.

The occasional and extraordinary African American became the person to be lauded and praised. It was sometimes surprising to whites that blacks could excel at anything. Even when confronted with evidence, some refused to see. People like William Clay, and Ben Neely were anomalies to some whites who had trouble "seeing." The eventual acceptance of Dr. Lawrence Perry, Amos Washington, Frank Seymour, and John Burton proved that earlier efforts of Clay and Neely were not in vain.

Meanwhile, blacks had begun to shed their cloaks of timidity and were demanding more from the system. This surge, helped along by the appearance of such groups as the National Urban League and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, prepared the way for the emergence of Martin Luther King, Jr. Previous societal structures, which almost always placed the blacks on the bottom rung, while whites were always on top, had to give way when the downtrodden realized that being African American could be worn as a badge of honor. Thus previous concepts of being free and equal waxed strong.

Changes in the fabric of Ypsilanti mores and habits brought about opportunities for advancement previously denied. The election of John H. Burton and of George D. Goodman to the office of mayor in 1967 and 1972, respectfully, proved even to skeptics that responsible leadership abilities were not sole possessions of persons with white skins. Goodman went on to become the longest tenured mayor in the history of the city. This took place where the major electorate was white.

Ypsilantians are much more likely to judge the character and abilities of aspirants to important leadership positions than to consider the color of skin.

This is not to say that bigotry no longer lives in the city; but it does appear that efforts to mold a bigotry-free environment is at least progressing. Many darker skinned citizens now savor opportunities to help move the city toward the ideal of civil liberty and freedom.

The author is hopeful that citizens of this proud city will be guided by the admonition of II Chronicles 7:14:

> If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my

> face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

A major purpose of this book is to teach young African Americans to be aware of their potentials and to be proud of their heritage. I hope that our developing multiracial society will learn to thrive on a knowledge of contributions of all who have given so much to make life here what it is.

The unwillingness of some people to do all they can for the society in which they live is a regrettable hindrance to future development as well as to present enjoyment of the total environment.

I have tried to present here some reasons for all Ypsilantians to be proud of their city, and to cherish its hopes and challenges for the future. The people who contributed were ordinary folk, just as we are, and the city is better because they lived and cared.

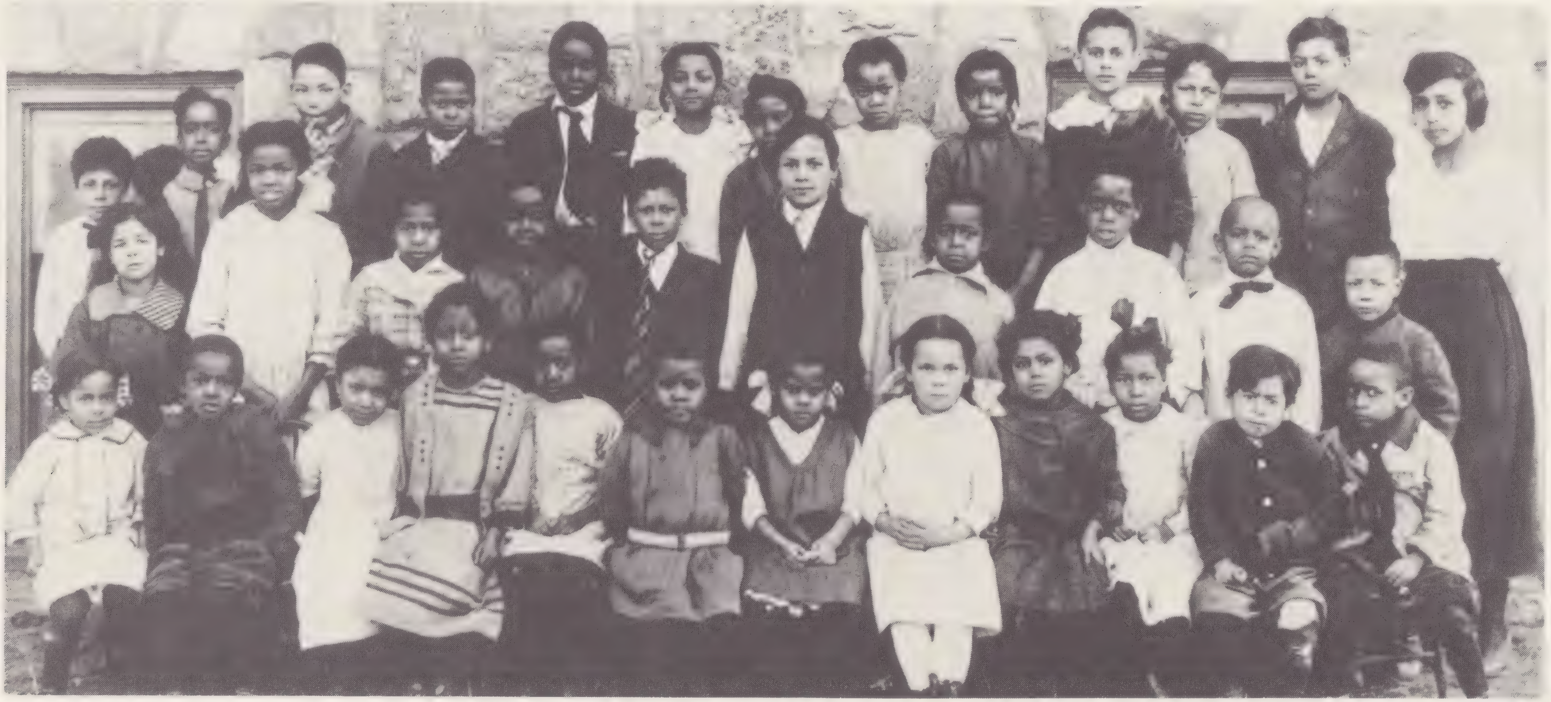
January 5, 1993
A.P.M.

ELECTED AFRICAN AMERICAN OFFICIALS IN YPSILANTI

Years Served	Name	Years Served	Name
1945 - 1946	Frank Seymour	1975 - 1976	GEORGE GOODMAN
1946 - 1947	Frank Seymour		Mattie L. Dorsey
1947 - 1948	John Burton		Wm. P. Clay, Jr.
	Amos Washington	1976 - 1977	GEORGE GOODMAN
1948 - 1949	Amos Washington		Mattie L. Dorsey
1949 - 1950	Amos Washington		Wm. P. Clay, Jr.
1950 - 1951	Amos Washington	1977 - 1978	GEORGE GOODMAN
	John Burton		Wm. P. Clay, Jr.
1951 - 1952	John Burton		John Bass
1952 - 1953	John Burton	1978 - 1979	GEORGE GOODMAN
1953 - 1954	John Burton		John Bass#
1954 - 1955	John Burton		Douglas Harris
1955 - 1956	John Burton#	1979 - 1980	GEORGE GOODMAN
1956 - 1957	John Burton#		Douglas Harris
1957 - 1958	John Burton		Jerome Strong
1958 - 1959	John Burton	1980 - 1981	GEORGE GOODMAN
1959 - 1960	John Burton#		Douglas Harris
1960 - 1961	John Burton		Jerome Strong
1961 - 1962	John Burton	1981 - 1982	GEORGE GOODMAN
1962 - 1963	John Burton		Douglas Harris
1963 - 1964	John Burton	1982 - 1983	GEORGE GOODMAN*
1964 - 1965	John Burton		Albert Robinson
1965 - 1966	John Burton	1983 - 1984	Albert Robinson#
	Charles Jackson		Eula Booker Tate
1966 - 1967	John Burton		Eric Smith+
	Charles Jackson	1984 - 1985	Albert Robinson
	Samuel Bass		Eula Booker Tate
1967 - 1968	Samuel Bass		Eric Smith+
	John Burton##	1986 - 1987	Albert Robinson
1968 - 1969	Samuel Bass		Eula Booker Tate#
	John Burton##		Eric Smith
1969 - 1970	Samuel Bass	1987 - 1988	Albert Robinson
1970 - 1971	George Goodman		Eula Booker Tate
1971 - 1972	George Goodman	1988 - 1989	Albert Robinson
	Norman Kennedy		Eula Booker Tate
1972 - 1973	George Goodman##	1989 - 1990	Albert Robinson
	Norman Kennedy		Eula Booker Tate
1973 - 1974	GEORGE GOODMAN		James Brown+
	Mattie L. Dorsey	1990 - 1991	Albert Robinson
1974 - 1975	GEORGE GOODMAN		Eula Booker Tate*
	Mattie L. Dorsey		Kittie Wilson**
	Wm. P. Clay, Jr.	1991 - 1992	Albert Robinson
			Mary L. Foley

#Mayor Pro-Tem
##Mayor elected by Council
*Resigned early

**Completed Tate's term
+Student member
CAPS Mayor elected city-wide



ADAMS STREET SCHOOL, FEBRUARY 1919. Left right, 1st row: Helen Davis Walls, George (Bud) Freeman; Isabell Wright, Thursell Bayliss, Susie Robb, Josephine (Big Jo) Sears, _______ Sears, Thelma Robbins, Myrtle Bass Johnson, Velma (Sweetie Lee) Calvert, Lawrence Davis, Kenneth Kersey. 2d row: Francie Hawkins Morgan, Lucille Freeman, Margaret Wright, George Robb, Robert Wright, Dalmore Norris, James Bayliss, Theodore Bayliss, John Williams, Grant Robbins. 3d row: Harold Wright, Orville Kersey, Delmore Derrick, Earl Seevers, Sylvester Thomas, unknown, unknown, Melissa Stephens, Anna Harris Parker, Joseph Upthegrove, Naomi Hawkins, Mose Bass, Miss Bernice Kersey, teacher. [Identifications supplied by Hubel Freeman].

Chapter One

"In the Beginning"

A search for true freedom was the obvious motivation to those early settlers of Ypsilanti. A cursory look at the men who came in 1823 and the mood which seemed to overshadow their lives, leaves us with the assumption that they honestly sought to establish a society which would reflect their own philosophies and strengthen their ethical standards.

The early nineteenth century was a period when adventure was paramount. The ideals of those who were responsible for establishing the United States of America, for writing the Bill of Rights, and for promoting ideas of liberty of conscience, permeated deeply into the national psyche. Though some people were unwilling to settle in virgin territory, there were those who yearned for the chance.

Ypsilanti came into being because a few pioneers liked what the area offered and decided to accept the challenges of establishing a new community.

Agriculture reigned supreme in the early 1800s, and a basic consideration of explorers was the opportunity to support themselves from the land. It is necessary, however, to keep in mind that there were some prevailing ideas about which the settlers showed little concern. They did not necessarily hate the native Indians which they found here, nor were they intolerant towards African Americans found living in nearby communities when they arrived. To some degree, however, they were influenced by prevailing attitudes about both groups. Thus, their accomodation of peoples of varying races and nationalities were little different from practices existing in other northern communities.

The inspirational leader of the small group of dreamers was Benjamin Woodruff. A native of Morristown, New Jersey, he had served in the Revolutionary War as a drummer boy. When the war ended he returned home where he married his childhood sweetheart, Ella Eichlor, and shortly thereafter moved to Sandusky, Ohio. He taught school for a period, until his wife received a small inheritance from her grandfather. This provided the impetus for Woodruff to consider a long time dream of moving into the Michigan Territory, some distance to the north of Sandusky. Soon he was busily convincing some of his neighbors to accompany him on an exploratory trip in the pursuit of cheap land.

One of the first to express an interest in accompanying Woodruff was his brother-in-law, William Eichlor. Another neighbor, Oronte Grant, had just experienced a setback in his plans when property upon which he had settled his family was discovered to have an unclear title, and was claimed by some one else. Another friend, Hiram Tuttle,had become dissatisfied with his progress in Sandusky,and wanted to make a new start elsewhere.

Early one morning in the spring of 1823, the four men set out to explore the northern part of the Northwest Territory. Their several wagons were loaded with provisions to last several days, and a few personal items. A few cows, some chickens, and extra horses helped to make up the wagon train. Such a sight was not unusual for the time, and the travellers drew little attention as they trudged northward to a land about which they knew little.

The first major stop was at Monroe, Michigan, where they visited acquaintances. Some interest was created among their hosts, and when they left a few days later, David Stiles, George Hall, and a Captain Fair joined the caravan. Eichlor, however, remained behind to mind the stock and provisions.

A flat-bottomed boat was secured at Monroe, enabling the men to travel up the Huron River. Most nights they found clearances where they could sleep,but on one or two occasions the fear of wild animals caused them to remain in the boat. Plenty of game was available, so hunger was not a problem. Perhaps they encountered traveling bands of Indians, but since they were friendly, no unusual problems were experienced. Eventually the party arrived at Godfroy's Trading Post, where they discussed their objectives before deciding to continue a bit farther. A few miles more and they came to a clearing which caught their attention. Almost overwhelmed by its beauty, and impressed with the availability of lumber, game, and tillable land, they decided to settle at that location.

Several days were spent surveying and laying out claims. Then, leaving Stiles on guard, the others returned south to get families and provisions. On July 6, 1823, the Woodruff family arrived back at the settlement. The temporary home constructed by Stiles was a far cry from the home the Woodruff's had at Sandusky. Too late to celebrate Independence Day, Woodruff vowed a real celebration the following year.

A few days later, Woodruff journeyed to Detroit, the seat of the Territorial Government, in order to make arrangements for mail. It was agreed that the settlement would have the temporary name of Woodruff's Grove, with Woodruff as temporary postmaster. Washtenaw County was new and without a county seat, so was still administered by Wayne County.

Throughout the summer of 1823 and into the winter, the settlers were busily constructing homes for themselves and their families. A few businesses were established, and plots were laid out and placed on sale. One of the principal landowners was Judge Augustus Brevoort Woodward, a resident of Detroit. Names of other settlers in Woodruff's Grove included Daniel Cross, David Beverly, Robert Stitts, John Thayer, and J. Brainerd.

Woodruff was determined to observe July 4, the following year, so he journeyed to Detroit a few days early in order to secure the proper supplies. He returned with raisins, rice, cheese, loaf-sugar, and a barrel of whiskey, according to Harvey C. Colburn in his Story of Ypsilanti. All the neighbors from the surrounding area were invited, and we are told, had a wonderful time celebrating United States Independence.

It should be noted that there were other settlers in the area when the Woodruff party arrived. To the west, in what is better known as Pittsfield Township, Jacob Aray owned a sizeable farm. He was a "Pennsylvania Dutchman" who had fallen in love with and married a woman of

French, Indian, and Negro ancestry. About 1817, he moved his family to Michigan and took advantage of the opportunity to carve out a farm for himself. Here he headed a family which was to contribute conspicuously to the area for several decades. His children are said to have been living applications of the Mendelian theory, for they ranged in color and physical appearance from white to dark brown. To the south there were Richersons, a name which seems to have preceded Richardsons. Some of these were persons with light skin, indicating that mixtures had taken place at some time or other. The Carter family was also present in Whittaker and Augusta Township.

Judge August Brevoort Woodward, a prominent resident of the territory, was interested in the new settlement along the Huron River, and as previously pointed out, was a speculator in land. He had acquired over 600 acres south of Chicago Road (Michigan Avenue). This quite naturally enhanced his standing in this community. He was present at a village meeting in 1825, when a major order of business was the selection of a permanent name for the village. Considering a prominent name in the news of the day, His Honor suggested Ypsilanti.

General Demetrius Ypsilantis was the major leader of a Greek uprising against the Turks, and whenever the delayed news arrived in this country, his star rose higher and brighter as a contemporary hero. After all, these were people who cherished freedom, and any person seeking to throw off the yoke of oppression became an immediate hero. Therefore the name was known among the settlers in the village. If there were any who objected, they did not dare raise their voice in opposition to the Honorable Judge. So the name was adopted. Perhaps this gesture of selecting the name of one who fought for freedom tempered any objections which may have been in the minds of settlers against blacks who may have wanted to settle in the village.

The U. S. Census of 1830, just seven years after settlement of the village, showed a few people of color as living here. One such family carried the surname of Campbell, and lived with the white Anderson family. Colburn did not note this family's earlier arrival, but mentioned a story which placed Campbell in the village before 1840. When James Trust opened a barber shop on Michigan Avenue about 1840, "Old Black Sam," was determined "that no other colored person should live in the town." This resolution was put to test when the shop was opened. "A physical encounter speedily took place in which the front of the barber shop was wrecked and the redoubtable Sam, much battered and bloody, was driven off the premises by the barber." To add insult to injury, Sam appeared before Justice Voorhees where he was fined ten dollars.

Reflecting the spirit of the times, Mark Norris explored the area about 1827, and made the decision to settle in the new Village of Ypsilanti. This native New Yorker sought escape from the notorious Masonic conflicts of the time. He purchased two parcels just east of the Huron River, and adjacent to the village. When he returned to New York he arranged to ship an entire factory with which to make underwear. He is also credited with building the first frame house in the village. Later he built a second home which became famous for its beautiful flower gardens. Here the Norrises entertained lavishly, and usually welcomed traveling preachers. This caused it to be dubbed by the local citizens as "The Ministers' Hotel." He is important to history because his various financial ventures made him one of the most important leaders of the area. The Norris home is thought to have been one of the "stations" of the Underground Railroad. There is some question, however, over the extent of his involvement. Norris' brother, Justin, though less influential generally than his brother, seems to have been heavily involved in the anti-slavery movement.

Other arrivals in the Village who were destined to have great influence on its future should be noted. John Fleming settled here in 1827, purchasing 80 acres in Section 12, just east of the settlement. Lyman Wiard arrived a year earlier, in 1826, purchasing 80 acres in Section 11, two miles to the east of the village. John Forsythe settled in 1828, building on land he purchased on Chicago Road, just east of the spot where Woodruff School would be built later. Jonathan Morton became the first storekeeper of note when he went into business with a partner and fellow adventurer, Aretus Belden. A Massachusetts native, Morton was only twenty-two when he discovered the area. Tired of his life as a traveling salesman, he decided to settle in this young village. He ordered a supply of dry goods and opened a store in a log building on the northeast corner of Pearl and Huron.

John Bryan is credited with building the first wagon bridge across the Huron River in

Washtenaw County, just below the present structure. It replaced a foot bridge which was built by laying parallel lengths of logs across the river with short lengths laid over them.

During this period, Jacob Larzelere, assisted by his carpenter friend, John Stockdale, formerly of England, built the first brick house in the Village. Salmon Champion came about 1832, and built a house which later became a rest stop for President Martin Van Buren, entertained by Colonel Thomas McKinstry, who had acquired it.

William R. Post traveled from his home at Stephenson, NY, at the same time as Arden H. Ballard. George King, an Englishman, settled in the village in 1834, the same year as James Hutchinson, the latter the grandfather of the trading stamp innovator. Elias Skinner came from Vermont in 1837, about the same time as Walter Bucklee. By this time there were one hundred twenty-five homes in the Village of Ypsilanti. The small post office was under the supervision of Isaac Powers. The enumerators working on the U. S. Census of 1840 noted a population of 1,265, including five members of the black B. D. Davis family. Fifty-eight "Blacks" were enumerated in Washtenaw County.

Washtenaw County Black Males: 1840 Census

Eph. Williamson	5	[32]	Frederick Hall*	1	[73]
Unreadable	5	[34]	E. B. Davis*	1	[97]
J. Perkins*	1	[63]	W. S. Andrews*	1	[97]
Wm. R. Thompson*	2	[66]	S. Millikin	3	[100]
Freeman	5	[67]	Silas Ray	4	----
Gravette	9	[125]	Gabriel Watts	3	[126]
Stephen Green	4	[126]	Jacob Aray*	6	[126]

Berthana Aray	2	[126]	Jake Aray	5	[126]
J. W. Brooks	3	[127]	Grace Bishop	3	[132]
Samuel Bishop	2	[132]	D. Z. Wallace*	1	[137]
A. Roper*	2	[145]			

*White head of family with blacks living there.
|Number in family. []Page in Census.

Even though the number of African Americans residing in the Village in 1840 was small, others were being attracted. This assumption explains the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Society in 1843. It was at that time that two persons - Sylus Jones and Flora Thompson began holding religious meetings in their homes. This group was called a mission when presented to the Indiana Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church about 1845. During the latter part of 1847, it was decided by the trustees that the organization should be incorporated under the state statutes. In early 1848, the papers were filed at the County Court in Ann Arbor,establishing the African Methodist Episcopal Society of Ypsilanti. Trustees who signed the application were: Alfred Pane, William Banion, Eldred Barrett, Samuel Wells, and Luke Matthews. The application was granted.

Other churches in the community seemed to welcome their darker communicants, but for many blacks, the emotionalism of the AME churches, and the closeness of members were so ingrained that worship in their own church was desired. Too, the AME Church had served both slaves and freedmen in the South. With the establishment of an AME church in Detroit in 1839 there was encouragement to provide similar opportunities in Ypsilanti so that residents could worship in their own church, and in their own way. During the 1830s, the anti-masonic movement was rampant in southeastern Michigan. **The Western Immigrant** operating out of Ann Arbor, became the organ of the movement. The Masonics won in the Washtenaw County elections of 1831, but by 1835, the issue had all but vanished. In 1836, the Ohio boundary line became a Congressional dispute. Those in favor of the disputed area going to Ohio were nicknamed "Submissionists," while those in favor of ceding it to Michigan were called "State's Righters." The latter group was strongest in Washtenaw County.

It was during this period that the tone of the population began to change. "The moral idealism and the desire for religious freedom," so identifiable in the early settlers, began to give way to materialism and the desire for economic opportunity. Their purpose was the "bettering of their fortunes."

The Black Hawk Indian War of 1832, though distantly removed from the area, caused apprehension among citizens. There was a fear that in defeat, Black Hawk and his Sac and Fox Indians would head for Canada via the old Pottawatomie Trail. Concern was heightened when a rumor placed Black Hawk at the White Pigeon prairie, where his followers were burning and murdering everybody along the way. A group of militiamen from Plymouth were ordered to gather at the Ten Eyck Tavern, a few miles west of Detroit. Another regiment from Dexter left there about two in the morning, arriving in Ypsilanti at about two in the afternoon, "footsore and weary." The groups joined and headed for Saline, where they were told to await further orders. After two days it was learned that Black Hawk had been captured in Wisconsin and his followers dispersed.

Another event, important to our story was the establishment of a bank in 1836. This was a direct result of legislative enactment on March 28 of that year, which saw the chartering of the Bank of Ypsilanti. The incorporators were Henry Compton, Arden H. Ballard, Marcus Lane, Mark Norris, Silas French, Grove Spencer, Timothy Treadwell, and David Balantine. Benjaman Follett replaced Balantine as treasurer the following year.

Most of the efforts at stability were doomed to failure, for many people had abandoned their much slower money making pursuits to try their hands at the fast money of banks and other types of speculation. This drew some shady characters to the village, resulting in the establishment of a local "Vigilance Committee."

By the end of 1839, one hundred and twelve men had been convicted of crime, $10,000 worth of stolen goods recovered, and numbers of undesirable citizens driven from the community."

Though, as mentioned earlier, there were African Americans already living in the area when Ypsilanti was settled, Colburn's statement that the first "negro families" moved into the village in 1842 is probably wrong. First, the "Old Black Sam" to which he refers,was here when the barber arrived,ready to protect himself from any others who wanted to share the village's benevolences. Also, the two persons credited with the establishment of the African Methodist

Episcopal Society of Ypsilanti, were here in 1843. Since there was no rampant opposition to African Americans at the time, there are few records to provide information about their arrival. Colburn was perhaps unaware of Census records of 1830 and 1840 which showed Negroes residing with whites, possibly as servants, but nevertheless, were residents. This practice was not unusual for the time, as sympathetic whites were moved to this kind of benevolence much earlier in the country's history.

Chapter Two

"Give Us the Ballot"

When Michigan became a state in 1837, voting rights were denied to those of African descent. Article 1, Section II, provided:

> Every white male citizen above the age of twenty-one years, having resided in the state six months next preceding any election, shall be entitled to vote at such election; and every white male inhabitant of the age aforesaid who may be a resident of this state at the time of the signing of this Constitution.

As a result of this disturbing stance, a state Convention was called for October 27 and 28, 1843, for representatives of men of color to meet in Detroit. Announcements appeared in the Signal of Liberty, the anti-slavery paper published in Ann Arbor. Out of that convention came the following statement:

> We the representatives of the oppressed of this State, will continue to write, publish, cry aloud, and spare not, in opposition to all political injustice, all legislation, violating the spirit of equality until the first and second articles of our state constitution shall cease to conflict with each other and the blessings of Equal Political Liberty, shall have been extended to all men of whatever clime, language, or nation within this state, and also the United States which professes to be the land of the free and an asylum for the oppressed of all nations - that the Declaration of Independence is the textbook of this nation and without its doctrines be maintained, our government is insecure.

The president of that convention was the Reverend William Monroe, of Detroit, with Calvin Hackett,of Jackson as the vice-president. J. W.Brooks, of Pittsfield, was another vice-president, and Othello P. Hoyt and Nelson Oekry served jointly as secretaries.

At each subsequent session of the Legislature petitions were presented requesting changes toward giving the ballot to the non-white portion of the population. "The attitude of the Michigan Legislature towards Negro suffrage was that of mild opposition rather than friendly disposition. The various committees which referred the matter of changing the constitution by striking out the word 'white' were evenly divided and the opposition took the attitude that by so doing Michigan would become a haven or dumping ground for Negroes from all over the United States."

In 1843, F. J. Littlejohn, Chairman of the committee considering deletion, stated:

> Your committee are inclined to accord in the views of Thomas Jefferson when he says that "Nothing is more clearly written in the books of destiny than the emancipation of the blacks; and it is equally certain that the two races will never lie in a state of equal freedom under the same government, so insurmountable are the barriers which nature, habit, and opinion have established between them.

A Senate committee of the 1845 Legislature favored striking out the word "white", in the following statement:

> Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people. No restrictions, either by color or otherwise are here.All of the people contribute to support the government,and are alike

> entitled to protection in all their rights. Does the colored taxpayer enjoy this protection? No! Far from it. He is denied a right otherwise universal. He is thus politically degraded, and that too, in violation of the constitutional provision cited. Social degredation follows, society consigns him to a lower place; he is shorn of the most cherished political right, is incapacitated for political right, and is rendered unhappy by the hands which should have ministered benefit.

African Americans of Ypsilanti were novices in the citizenship process, as they were in the northern part of the United States. In many ways they were permitted to live near normal lives, finding work to match their skills, spending their earnings as they pleased, educating their children through existing schools, and acquiring homes. They were also becoming politically and socially aware. They made friends with some whites who joined in the direct involvement of helping escaping slaves to get to Canada.

There is reason to believe that most white people were familiar with the American Colonization Society. This organization had for some years advocated freeing all slaves and then sending them to Africa, or some other friendly locale. Many blacks knew no other country than the United States, and having heard the traditional stories about Africa as told to them by whites, had no desire go there.

Washtenaw County reflected changing ideas through voting patterns, particularly for the years 1852, 1854, and 1856. The 1852 vote gave the Democrats an almost 320 majority. By 1854, the Whigs, as a fading entity, had all but disappeared. A new party, the Republican, was emerging. The organizers of this party, meeting in Jackson, adopted a strong anti-slavery platform. The winning margin that year was over 700 votes. Two years later, in 1856, the slavery issue was even sharper, and Washtenaw County provided a majority of 736 votes for Fremont. The issue of "Free Soil, Free Speech, Free Men," appealed to a growing number of voters, signaling a gradual change throughout the area.

Contributing to this change was the growing number of darker skinned citizens who were becoming more vocal in their demands for full human rights. Their arguments were strengthened by the arrival in the Village of black craftsmen with sorely needed skills. Earl Eaton, William Johnson, and Charles Blakeley, brought their brick making skills, joining with brickmason Henry Johnson. Robert Morton boldly opened a grocery business, indicating that he believed there was sufficient support for it. John W. Hall was a cooper, and evidently offered more education than the others. Sanford Wells, a barber, was soon accepted as a spokesman, and his barber shop on Michigan Avenue became a center for the exchange of ideas for both groups. Richard K. Spofford operated a blacksmith shop, while Pleasant Underwood served as the Pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Society. George McCoy arrived from Canada about 1851, with his growing family, and a desire to establish a business. With some help, much of it likely coming from the Starkweathers, and possibly from the Norrises, he was soon making cigars and transporting them to Detroit where there was a market.

Ypsilanti was undoubtedly among the most tolerant places in the area. Work was available and homes could be built anywhere in the Village. Generally speaking anyone could walk the streets in safety, and the small number of blacks was no threat to anybody. These facts, along with geography, helped to make the little village a sort of hub for a most unusual transportation system known as the Underground Railroad.

Chapter Three

"The Railroad: A Way to Freedom"

Slaves began escaping from the time the unsavory practice was instituted. Michigan provided only one of a series of escape routes. Since most slaves were aware that Canada was a haven, particularly after Great Britain freed all her slaves in 1835, routes were cut through any place which led them to the "Promised land." So long before the name "Underground Railroad" was applied to the system, slaves were escaping.

Because slavery was a valuable system to the slave holder, catching the escapees and return-them, either to their original owners, or to someone willing to pay for their return, became a lucrative practice. "Paddyrollers," [slave hunter] as some were called, along with informers, made for an effective control system. Communities where freedmen had settled were often targets for locating escapees. Sometimes slavers took advantage of the system and sent freedmen into slavery, even some who were born free. However, there were many escapees who found permanent freedom.

Ypsilanti became a kind of hub in this area for the escaping slave,primarily because of geography. Sometime in the 1830s, the system became more organized, largely the work of Levi Coffin, a Quaker abolitionist and business man. He is often referred to as the "President of the Underground Railroad." His home in Ohio became a stopping place for an estimated 3,000 escaping slaves. At the right time he would send them on their way, well fed and reclothed. With the help of others, such as Laura Smith Haviland, also a Quaker who lived in Adrian, stations were established about ten miles apart. An ardent Detroit worker who deserves a permanent place in the history of slave freedom was George DeBaptiste, whose work on behalf of escaping slaves in Ohio, Wisconsin, and Indiana made so many enemies that he had to finally settle in Detroit, where he became a fixture in the movement to aid escaping slaves. On more than one occasion he came to Ypsilanti to provide help for the local committee, and aided in snatching several escapees from the slave hunters'snare.

Often the bedraggled travelers were convinced that this was a safe place to stop, and some would forego continuing the trip to Canada.

They did not know about the occasional visits of slave hunters, or thought these deterrents would not ensnare them. For those brave enough to tarry, there was immediate employment at many kinds of jobs. Too, their presence did not seem to be a threat as in some communities. Sometimes a public display of racial prejudice brought down the wrath of the local press. An example of this denunciation was printed in the June 3, 1864 issue of The Ypsilanti Democrat:

> **Worse than slaveholders** - We understand that a woman entered S. Post's store the other day, and seeing a boy a shade darker than herself, rolling up goods (but not waiting upon customers, but on clerks), snuffed a nigger in the breeze, an away she went fairly into conniption fits. Poor woman, what would she do if she was a slave mistress? Many a mistress of slaves down south, who look upon her and all such with perfect contempt, as a plebian, a mudsill in society, associate with these offensive colored people by day and by night. They can't dress or disrobe themselves without the aid of a colored woman. The darkey boy rides by the side of the mistress. These same boys not only wait on clerks but on customers. What is innocent in a slave,is forsooth an enormous offense in a free person here at the north,with certain class would be stuck up pinks and patterns of society. We trust she will survive the shock and, though as she declares, she may never

> more enter Sam's store, that she may have grace given him to patiently dispense with the loss of her patronage, knowing that this same incident published to the world is the most advertisement he ever had in the papers. For be it known, that he has some of those Delains left yet, but off fast. Now is your chance to get a good dress cheap.

Among the early antislavery activists in the Ypsilanti area were some leading citizens. Quakers in and out of the village were known to be involved, but there were others, among which were: Henry R. Griffin, the principal of the Academy and Teachers Seminary; Allen A. Copeland, a prominent member of the Presbyterian Church of the village; Justin Norris, a strong Methodist, and brother of the business man, Mark Norris; W. W. Patchin, a former teacher at Raisin Institute near Adrian, who became the leader of the Free Soil Party in the county; the Leonard Chase family, who lived on the hill of Summit and Cross streets; the Eurotas Morton family, who often baked bread and prepared other food for the runaways; the Prescott family, which lived north of town near the railroad tracks, and George McCoy, the former slave who had moved at first to Canada, but came to Ypsilanti about 1851, and eventually opened a cigar factory. When the William McAndrew family arrived from Scotland in 1849, they are said to have become active with the slavery opponents.

The story of Willis and Elsie Hamilton is an illustration of the lengths slave hunters were willing to go to retrieve their prey.

Willis and Elsie Hamilton had succeeded in escaping from the plantation on which they lived in Tennessee, and had finally reached Ypsilanti, where they stopped for a few days. The local folks treated them well, and they were possibly considering staying a while.

What they did not know was that their owner had gathered a posse and was in hot pursuit. After arriving in town, they decided to go about retrieving the property in a legal manner, and were prepared to go to an address which had been supplied. Perhaps they had heard of the antislavery sentiments prevalent in the area but did not want to face the wrath of those opposed to their beliefs.

Having summoned an officer of the law from Detroit, to whom they presented descriptions of the escaped slaves, the party went to the house where the Hamiltons were supposed to be living. There they found no one answering that description. They did not know that news of their coming had preceded them, and DeBaptiste and others had rushed the slavers' prey out of town and towards Detroit and safety. Undaunted, the hunters learned of another couple whose description matched their quarry. With the officer tagging along, they went to the other house, and sure enough, the resemblance was enough to convince bystanders that these might be the hunted slaves.

The posse forced itself into the home of its substitute objects, and with drawn guns, forced Gordon to stand against the wall. The wife was ill and was lying in bed. Their small child began to scream and cry, while her father pleaded that they were free, and were previously freed by their owners. The man pleaded that he was not Hamilton, but that his name was Gordon. He begged the officer to force the posse to allow him to get papers from a trunk in another room so that he could prove his identity.

The leader of the posse urged the officer to ignore this plea and to proceed with arresting the family so that they could begin their trip home. The officer, however, was not convinced that these men were right. He made them put away their guns, and then accompanied Gordon to seek the family's papers. In a few minutes he returned to chastise the slave hunters for wasting his time. He said the man's papers were in order, and that all the evidence presented proved that this was indeed Gordon and not Hamilton.

With the help of local citizens who had gathered to watch the spectacle, the posse was threatened with being jailed if they did not leave town immediately,which they did posthaste.

The first national effort to curb the runaway slave problem was the Runaway Slave Act of 1793,but that legislation proved ineffective. The regular trek of escapees to Mexico, the Bahamas, and other West Indies islands continued without much hindrance from the government. It was the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 which represented the government's effort to tighten existing laws. One writer described this effort by the radical Henry Clay as follows:

> It provided for numerous United States Commissioners to be appointed, gave them the power to judge and to remand men to slavery, deprived the alleged slave of his own testimony, right of trial by jury and habeas corpus. It gave the Commissioner a ten dollar fee if he decided for the master, and a five dollar fee if he decided for the slave. United States marshals were required to make arrests, and if they refused they should be fined $1000 and be made to pay for the slave. The marshals and commissioners could call upon bystanders to assist in making captures, and if a citizen refused, could be imprisoned six months, fined $1000 and be made to pay for the slave.

There was an immediate outcry from citizens throughout the North, and many who were previously inactive in the fight against slavery now rose up in anger. Some believe that this law helped to speed the coming Civil War by strengthening the opposition to slavery. One writer wrote about Michigan's hostility, as follows:

> So hostile were the people of

> Michigan to slavery that very little attention was paid to Negroes escaping from slavery through the state. The movement through the underground railroad was so thoroughly organized that whole bands could move from station to station, and without fear.
>
> -John Dancy

Shortly after 1850, George McCoy moved to Ypsilanti from Canada, settling on the well known Starkweather farm, northwest of the city, near the Huron River. Possibly with his benefactor's help, he was soon in business for himself, making cigars and shipping them to Wyandotte and Detroit for sale. He soon moved to a house on Congress where a large barn was converted into a factory. His children worked with him there, and soon his older son, William, was driving a second wagon of the valuable cargo. Using locally grown tobacco, along with some imported from Canada, McCoy's business thrived. His transport wagons were built with false bottoms so that underneath each load was space for hiding escaped slaves. Meanwhile, several farmers, and especially Quakers, were active in driving the "contraband" to the next station, usually about ten miles, so that they eventually reached Detroit, and finally Canada. The names of those who have come down to us as station managers along the way to Ypsilanti are as follows:

Cassopolis -- Zachariah Sugart, Stephen Robue, Joel East, Parker Osburn
Schoolcraft -- Dr. Nathan Thomas
Climax -- William Gardner
Battle Creek-- Charles E. Barnes
Marshall -- Jabez S. Finch
Albion -- Edwin M. Johnson
Parma -- Townsend E. Gilbey
Jackson -- Lonson Wilcox, Normal Allen
Michigan Center-- Abel F. Fitch
Francisco Farm-- Francisco Family
Dexter -- Samuel W. Dexter and sons
Ann Arbor -- Guy Beckley, Jacob Vollano, Richard Glazier, John Geddes
Ypsilanti -- George McCoy, The Leonard Chases, Justin Norris, the Eurotus Mortons, Mark Norris.

A major and well known station was at Adrian, where the famous "Aunt Laura" Haviland lived. The Prince Bennett home on Tuttle Hill Road in Augusta Township, south of Ypsilanti, has been documented as a station. Some escapees went through Monroe and followed the "Pointes" to Detroit. There were stops in Belleville, Romulus, and other towns along the way to Detroit and Wyandotte. There awaiting sympathizers helped them across the river to Canada.

Richard Oltmanns, a student at Eastern Michigan University in the early 1940s, interviewed Anna McCoy, one of the daughters of George McCoy, for a paper he was writing on the Underground Railroad. She related an experience she had as a child. On that occasion a strange little girl wandered from the area of the large barn located behind their house. Anna was drawn to the little girl, hoping for the possibility of a new playmate. Anna's mother had forbidden her to go near the barn without specific permission. Seeing her moving toward the strange little girl, her mother rushed out, calling her inside. On the following day, Anna went again to the barn, only to find no one there. She also mentioned "strange" letters which always seemed to foretell the times when she would be forbidden to go near the barn, or even to play in the yard. The letters, she remembered, arrived from a certain place in Ohio. These letters also foretold the arrival of several neighbors bearing clothes and food, which were taken to the barn. One of the persons she recalled as a regular visitor during these times was Mrs. Eurotus Morton, a prominent Ypsilanti citizen. It was later that Anna realized that she was witnessing an important historical event.

Though Michigan was a part of the old Northwest Territory where slavery was forbidden by law, enforcement was another matter. The subject was not considered pertinent to the settlers of Ypsilanti in 1823, for they were in opposition to slavery in the first place. But a year later, when Ann Arbor was settled, two slaves were brought in immediately. This may make it easier to understand why in those early days, Ypsilanti was more attractive to darker citizens than was Ann Arbor. This preference seems to have remained until after the 1960 Census, when drastic changes came about in basic attitudes.

A study by Sister Marie Hayda, as part of her requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Michigan, assumed that the "community was divided on antislavery, with the town's ostensible leadership frowning on the movement." Strong support came from Quakers living south of Ypsilanti, but that was balanced off by a reluctance by local churches to circumvent the federal Fugitive Slave Law of 1850. Hayda believes that there was fear of antagonizing the south over the slavery issue. Perhaps that "lack of concern" prompted hundreds of young Ypsilantians to respond to the call to arms shortly after the election of Abraham Lincoln, and the outbreak of war soon after. African Americans, however, had to wait until a fear of losing the war would bring about a reconsideration.

The origin of the name Underground Railroad is not known, though in fact, there have been several conjections, each from fairly reliable sources. One of the most plausible comes from a Washington, D. C. newspaper:

A Mystery Not Yet Solved

The abolition incendiaries are

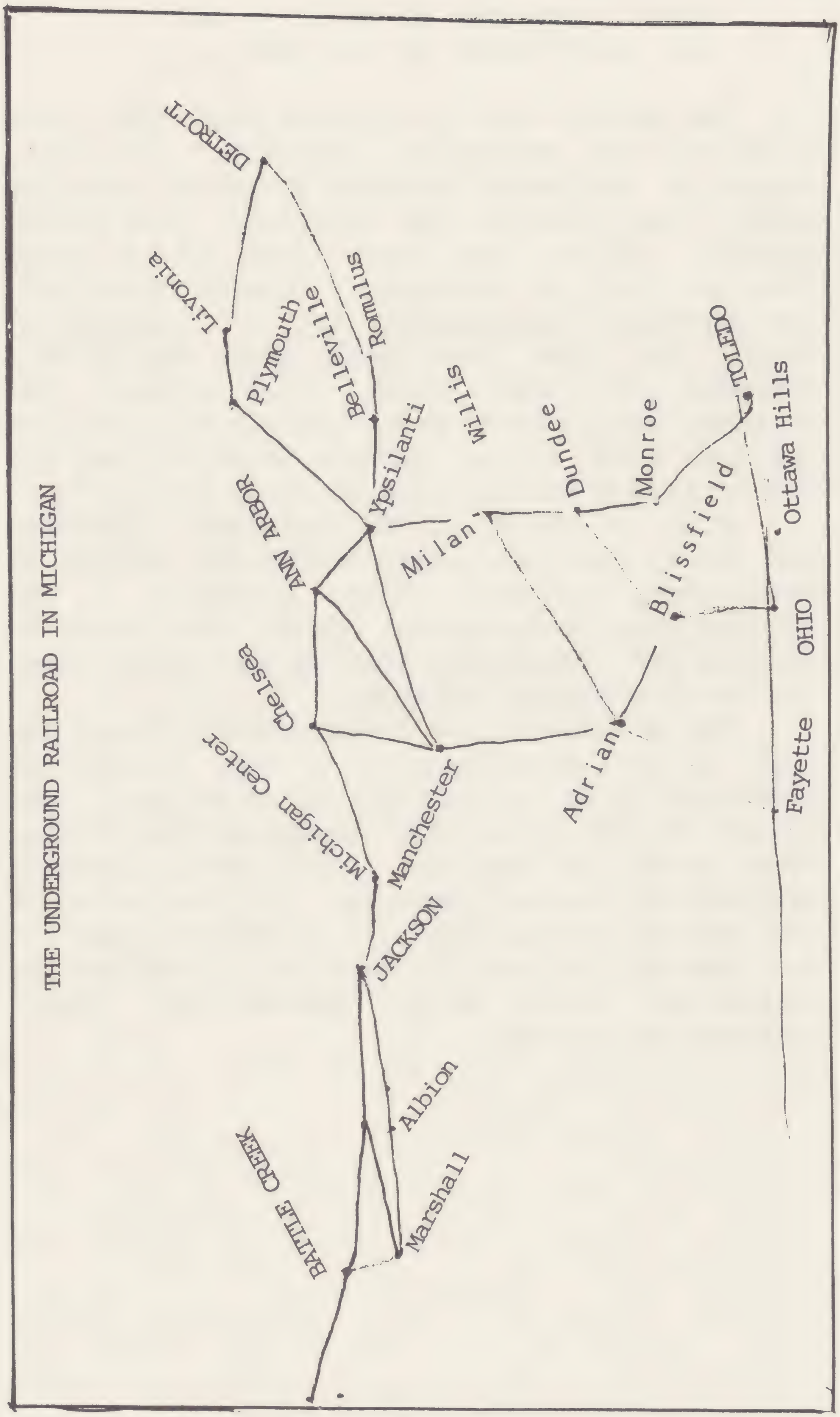
undermining, not only our domestic institutions, but the very foundations of our Capitol. Our citizens will recollect that the boy Jim, who was arrested last August, while lurking about the Capitol, would disclose nothing until he was subject to torture by screwing his fingers in a blacksmith's vise, when he acknowledged that he was to have been sent forth by railroad; was to have started near the place where he stood when discovered by the patrol.He refused to tell who was to aid him - said he did not know - and most likely did not. Nothing more could be got from him until they gave the screw another turn,when he said: "The railroad goes underground all the way to Boston." Our citizens are losing all their best servants. Some secret Yankee arrangement has been contrived by which they "stampede" from three to eight at a time, and no trace of them can be found until they reach the interior of New York or the New England states. They can not have gone by railroad, as every station is closely watched by secret police, yet there is no

> other conveyance by which a man
> can reach Albany in two days....

The author went on to claim that "The term which had been applied to poor Jim, in confidence, as the means by which he was to make his escape from bondage, and extorted from him by torture, having thus been given to the world from the city of Washington, became henceforth the universal appellation for a corporation which, for more than twenty years thereafter, extended its great trunk lines across the northern states from Mason and Dixon's Line and the Ohio River to the Queen's Dominion, and its ramifications far into the southern states."

With the coming of the Civil War, freedmen and slaves were eventually sought for service on both sides, and many served gallantly. The Emancipation Proclamation opened the door to freedom for everybody, erasing any further need for the Underground Railroad.

The Reconstruction Period would bring new hope to the Negro people, a hope which was sabotaged by an unexpected turn of events. The advent of such "vigilance" groups as the Ku Klux Klan, aided by southern legislators, stymied progress for several decades. But the period of the Underground Railroad is a definite part of our history, and must be used to strengthen the foundation upon which present and future progress is claimed.



THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD IN MICHIGAN

DETROIT
Livonia
Plymouth
Belleville
Romulus
Ypsilanti
Willis
ANN ARBOR
Milan
Dundee
Monroe
TOLEDO
Ottawa Hills
Blissfield
OHIO
Chelsea
Manchester
Adrian
Fayette
Michigan Center
Manchester
JACKSON
Albion
BATTLE CREEK
Marshall

Chapter Four

"Target: Freedom"

The black population of Michigan at the time of the state's joining the union in 1837 was an estimated 2095. Wayne County had the largest number, 697, with Washtenaw County second at 231. Berrien County was third with 215.

Allegan	5
Barry	8
Berrien	215
Branch	14
Calhoun	196
Cass	188
Chapewa	5
Clinton	2
Eaton	3
Genessee	14
Hillsdale	5
Ingham	18
Jackson	64
Kalamazoo	97
Kent	30
Lapere	6
Livingston	2
Mackinac	31
Macomb	27
Monroe	54
Midland	1
Oakland	68
Ongonagan	5
Oceana	19
Ottawa	35
Shiawassee	10
Schoolcraft	10
St. Clair	10
Tuscola	23
Van Buren	2
Washtenaw	231
Wayne	697

The United States Census of 1850 was a barometer of the growing interest of blacks to settle in the village of Ypsilanti. There were opportunities for employment, including skilled and unskilled labor. Among the growing population there were several who followed agriculture as their way of life.

YPSILANTI'S BLACK POPULATION, 1850

Name	Age	Occupation	Birth Place
Banyard, William	36	Laborer	Virginia
Jucretia	24	Housewife	Illinois
Boyer, John	24	Laborer	Virginia
Louisa	28	Housewife	Ohio
Jonah	9		Ohio
Lawson, Eliza	11		Ohio
Brown, John	33	Farmer	Unknown
Rachel	26	Housewife	New York
John, Jr.	1		Michigan
Alfred	6		Michigan
Brown, William W.	46	Farmer	Connect.
Lovinia	36	Housewife	New York
Lucian	18	Laborer	New York
Melissa	16		New York
Orelia	13		New York
Orin	11		New York
Alzina	9		New York
Elnora	2		New York
Coleman, Nathan	50	Laborer	Kentucky
Nancy	40	Housewife	Ohio
John R.	2		Michigan
Colvin, Henry	30	Laborer	Kentucky
Delon, Adam	30	Farmer	Virginia
Fox, Dudley	20	Laborer	Unknown
Green, Carter	55	Laborer	Virginia
Anna	39	Housewife	Ohio
Marietta	9		Michigan
Ellis A.	7		Michigan
Anna	4		Michigan
Higgins, Charles	27	Laborer	Unknown
Mary	21	Housewife	Ohio
Johnson, Benjamin	27	Laborer	Unknown
Johnson, George	25		Maryland

Johnson, Henry	45	Mason	No. Carol.
Eliza	30	Housewife	Virginia
Frederick	6		Michigan
Angeline	4		Michigan
Caroline	3		Michigan
Augusta	1		Michigan
Nathan	5		Michigan
Lewis, Alfred	51	Laborer	Virginia
Hanna	14		Canada
Alfred,Jr.	12		Canada
Henry	13		Canada
Morrow, Nelson	49	Laborer	Kentucky
Catherine	52	Housewife	So. Carol.
Morton, Robert	27	Laborer	Virginia
Ann	36	Housewife	Maryland
Eliza	11		Ohio
Norris, Arnold	23		Ohio
Pattison, William	49	Barber	
Clarissa	24	Housewife	New York
L. L.			Michigan
Prater, Henry	45		Kentucky
Robinson, William	26	Laborer	Penn.
Elizabeth	19	Housewife	New York
Roxford, Joseph	60	Laborer	Georgia
Elisha	1		Michigan
Samson, Eliza	15		Canada
Trust, James	42	Barber	Virginia
Mary A.	30	Housewife	Kentucky
Edward	1		Michigan
Turner, Jonas	22		Kentucky
White, Pbilip	26		Illinois
Martha	24	Housewife	Kentucky
John	5		Michigan
Woods, Stephen	41	Laborer	Unknown
Maria	33	Housewife	Ohio
Cordelia	-		Ohio

Theodore	2	Michigan
Albert	3mos.	Michigan

Perhaps a major contributor to local attitudes was the increasing number of African Americans in and around the village. Certainly they supplied local labor needs, and the census records reveal the gradual occupational changes taking place. The special skills they brought to the community were welcomed. But even those without special skills usually found jobs to sustain themselves and their families.

By 1860, Earl Eaton, William Johnson, and Charles Blakeley were listed as brick makers. Robert Morton and Henry Johnson, who arrived in the village about the same time, were operating grocery stores. John W. Hall, a cooper (barrel maker), was evidently of sufficient eduation to be convinced to serve as temporary principal/ teacher of the First Ward School, later known also as Adams School. Sanford Wells had begun his barbering business, while at the same time filling the role of community leader. Richard K. Spofford was the operator of a blacksmith shop. Pleasant Underwood was listed as the Pastor of the local African Methodist Episcopal Society, which was organized in 1843. George McCoy, who had moved to the village from Canada around 1850 was operating a successful cigar factory, transporting his wares to Detroit and Wyandotte by wagon. In the 1860 census, designations of women reflected growing activities. Previously the term "housewife" was standard. This census also provided the listing by wards, showing the dispersity of residencies of blacks.

Population Schedules of the 8th Census of the United States, 1860, Showing Black Residential Patterns

Name		Age	Occupation	Origin
			WARD ONE	
Gould,	Eliza	43		New York
Harris,	Nancy	18	Domestic	Canada
Scott,	Fanner	40	Day Labor	No. Carol.
	Rosha	31		Virginia
	Preston	11		Ohio
	Ganti	10		Canada
	Prince A.	7		Canada
	Henry	5		Canada
	Josephine	3		Canada
Wilkins,	Matilda	42		No. Carol.
Augustan,	Janus	49		Delaware
	Sophia	48		Maryland
	James	17		Delaware
	Matthew	11		Tenn.
	Amelia	10		Tenn.
	Oliver	4		Canada
Wells,	Sanford	37	Barber	Kentucky
	Carthena	27	Barber	Ohio
	Emily	14		Virginia
	Sarah E.	15		Ohio
	Emily I.	15		Ohio
Oliver,	Jacob	49	Farm labor	No. Carol.
	Tesseh	38		Kentucky
	Mary Ann	16		Kentucky
	Benjamin	14		Indiana
	Elizabeth	12		Indiana
	Nancy Jane	11		Indiana
	Lucy	8		Indiana

Sarah C.	5		Michigan
Lucinda	5		Michigan
Isaac	1		Michigan
Cunningham, Benjamin	60	Farm Labor	Virginia
Emily	44		Virginia
Margaret	10		Canada
Brown, John	40	Farm Labor	Virginia
Rachel	35		So. Carol.
Hannah	12		Canada
Stewart, Eliza	44	Laundress	Kentucky
Tassey	13		Canada
Ann E.	12		Canada
Martha	11		Canada
Rachel	9		Canada
Elizabeth	8		Canada
McQueen, Henry	27	Farm Labor	New York
Jano	23		Kentucky
Melinda	14		Michigan
Georgeanna	1		Michigan
York, Washington	42	Farm Labor	Kentucky
Sarah	57		Kentucky
David	14		Canada
George	12		Canada
Sara	11		Canada
Lucy	11		Canada
Thomas	5		Canada
Willson, Edward	31	Farm Labor	Kentucky
Margaret	16		Kentucky
O'Neil, Morris	30	Farm Labor	Indiana
Deelia	29		Maryland
Charlot F.	4		Michigan
David	1		MI

WARD TWO

Smith, Eliza	19	Domestic	Canada

Willson, Amanda	37	Domestic	Virginia
Eaton, Earl	25	Brickmaker	No. Carol.
Johnson, William	23	Brickmaker	Ohio
Blakeley, Charles	24	Brickmaker	So. Carol.
Oliver, Lewis	21	Day Labor	Alabama
Monroe, Mary	17	Domestic	Kentucky
Goodwin, Ann Eliz.	22	Domestic	
Taylor, Bradford	26	Farm Labor	So. Carol.
Sarah	26		Canada
David, Benjamin	20		Kentucky
Alley	20		Kentucky
Mary	6		Kentucky
Ann	6		Kentucky
Bell, John	14		So. Carol.
Simpson, Ann	17	Servant	Canada
Snowden, Mary A.	25	Servant	Maryland
Jackson, Ann	36	Servant	Kentucky
John	3		Canada
Francis, Sarah	35	Servant	Virginia
Johnson, Mary	17	Servant	Canada
Stevens, Martha	20	Servant	Ohio
Mumford, George	36	Day Labor	
Rebecca	27		Kentucky
Ida Jane	3 mos.		Michigan
Morton, Robert	38	Grocer	Kentucky
Ann	41		Maryland
Robert	8		Michigan
Charles M.	1		Michigan
Thompson, Samuel	53		Kentucky
Florilla	49		Maryland
Spring, Charlotte	21	Domestic	Indiana
Taylor, Martha	35	Domestic	Kentucky
Thompson, Lorenzo	17	Laborer	Ohio
Nichols, Henry	28	Laborer	Kentucky
Elizabeth	21		Kentucky
Mary A.	4		Canada

William	1		Kentucky
Murray, David	50	Laborer	Kentucky
Elizabeth	30		Kentucky
Ann E.	1		Kentucky

WARD THREE

Hamson, Johnson	75	Laborer	Virginia
William	15		Kentucky
John	7		Kentucky
Gale, Moses G.	48	Farm Labor	Virginia
McCoy, George	44		Virginia
Hamson, Ellen	44		Virginia
Coleman, Benjamin	38	Day Labor	Kentucky
Lucy	45		Kentucky
Morris	11		Canada
Charles	4		Canada
David	1		Michigan
Johnson, Henry	50	Mason	So. Carol.
Eliza	44		Virginia
Frederick	17		Michigan
Angeline	15		Michigan
Caroline	14		Michigan
Augusta	11		Michigan
Mary E.	9		Michigan
Hall, John W.	39	Cooper	Kentucky
Earline B.	24		Canada
Margaret M.	4		Canada
Alfred I.	3		Canada
Emogene	2		Michigan
Theodore P.	5 mos.		Michigan
McHarten, Oliver	50		Kentucky
Rebecca	25		Kentucky
Elizabeth	12		Indiana
William H.	10		Indiana
Angeline	5		Indiana

Charles	7 mos.		Canada
White, Philip	35	Farm Labor	Illinois
Merchant	13		Michigan
Young, John	21	Labor	Maryland
Henrietta	21		Maryland
Leonard	8		Maryland
Carsen, Francis	30		Maryland
William H.	11		Maryland
Louisa E.	13		Maryland
Leeke, Sarah	17	Servant	Maryland
Ohup(?), James	52	Barber	Virginia
Mary Ann	57		Kentucky
Edward	11		Michigan
Edgar	8		Michigan
Vannelia	4		Michigan
David	3		Michigan
John	10 mos.		Michigan
Spafford, Richard	30	Blacksmith	Virginia
Martha	22		So. Carol.
Mary Jane	7		Indiana
Maloina	5		Canada
Lyman	3		Michigan
William H.	2		Michigan
Willson, Susan A.	27	Servant	Canada

FOURTH WARD

Arnold, Norris	36	Barber	Ohio
Jacobs, Henry	23	Janitor	Alabama
Hannah	26		Alabama
Louisa	11		Alabama
Harriet	9		Alabama
Samuel	5		Canada
Mary	1		Michigan
Elizabeth	2mos.		Michigan
Lousey, Charles	28	Day Labor	Kentucky

Cazey, William	45	Farm Labor	Virginia
Mary Jane	34		Ohio
Thompson, Edwina	13		Ohio
McQuan, Mary	22	Servant	Ohio
Levia	10 Mos.		Michigan
Jorinie, Alenzo	30	Farm Labor	Kentucky
Bumer, Frances	19	Servant	Canada
Patton, Jeremiah	40	Day Labor	Tennessee
Nancy	28		Canada
Mary Jane	2		Michigan
Elizabeth	4		Michigan
Long, William, Jr.	21		Canada
Wickham, Amanda	20	Servant	Canada

FIFTH WARD

Dade, Sarah L.	15		Alabama
Williams, James	40	Day Labor	Canada
Caroline	34		Virginia
Noah	10		Canada
Elisha	7		Canada
Underwood, Pleasant	60	Preacher	Virginia
Armstrong, Lewis	66	Teamster	Kentucky
Fannie	65		Kentucky
Willson, Decatur	30	Farm Labor	Maryland
Louisa	19		Canada
Charlott M.	3		Canada
John S.	11 mos.		Canada
Bailey, William	50		Maryland
Ann Maria	49		Kentucky
Bird, Mary	19	Servant	Ohio
Carter, William C.	43	Barber	Mississippi
Caroline	34		No. Carol.
Mary	14		Michigan
Ellen	10		Michigan
Jane	7		Michigan

Stewart, Amelia	34		Virginia
McQuan, Charles	20	Farm Labor	Michigan
Caroline	25		New York
Bowles, Isaac	30		Kentucky
Edwards, David B.	38	Farm Labor	Pennsyl.
Sarah A.	23		New York
Bradley, Eliza	46		Connect.
Burley, John	36	Farm Labor	Maryland
Julia Ann	26		Virginia
Darefus(?), Joseph	27	Barber	Kentucky
Dodge, Irma	26		Kentucky
Traver, David	47	Farm Labor	Kentucky
Amanda	35		Ohio
Stephen	15		Canada
George	12		Canada
Amanda, Jr.	9		Canada
Susan	6		Canada
Josephine	4		Canada
John	2		Canada
Having, John B.	41	Farm Labor	Maryland
Jane Eliza	30		Kentucky
Hester Ann	13		Canada
Joufek (?)	11		Canada
Mary J.	11		Canada
Miranda	4		Canada
Smalley, Egbert S.	36		Kentucky
Susan Ann	29		Ohio
Irena T.	10		Canada
Josefek (?)	7		Canada
John	5		Canada

The writing of enumerators is sometimes difficult to read. The question marks indicate that difficulty. Also it is not a certainty that birth places provided enumerators were correct, since escaped slaves were fearful that such revelations might lead to their capture. To some the presence of free Negroes in the community was a problem. The editor of The Ypsilanti Commercial reflected public concern over the issue of suffrage for newly freed Negroes:

> It is important to get an exact view of this black suffrage. The fine comprehensive cut and slash against it is, "Niggers vote? Not by a d---d sight!" ...Which does not strike as conclusive. Here are a few considerations arranged in logical sequence, which readers who are not too much stuffed with prejudice and bastard conclusions, destitute of paternal premises may not disdain to weigh for a moment.
>
> I. Perhaps after all, the question is not so much whether a vote shall be given to the black, as whether it has not been given to him already. The nation has accorded to sundry men heretofore regarded as things and held as slaves, their freedom. To have and to hold for and during the period of their natural lives.
>
> II. Heretofore the blacks even as slaves, have not been without a vote—only their owners cast it for them. —now if all is to be restored to them of which they have been unjustly deprived, will any one maintain that a vote is to be withheld? Why not then, every other civil right?
>
> III. But what makes a freeman? Among

> other things certainly the right to hold property. In the present condition of the Treasury, we presume that it is not proposed to exempt the houses and lands and other acquirements of the freeman from taxation. IV. Will anybody say at this suggestion season of the year, i. e., between the seventeenth of June [Bunker Hill day] and the Fourth of July, that there can be just taxation without representation?

The above were the strong opinions of C. R. Pattison, often on the side of the newly freed blacks. Another article, appearing in the Ypsilanti Free Democrat on Friday, January 11, 1865, commended the "colored" population for what was seen as recent progress:

> The colored population of our city is gradually improving. They now have two churches. The Methodist was built some few years since, and though [on] one side of the city it is a creditable building. They have a talented minister, Rev. Franklin. The Baptists have recently bought the Old Presbyterian Church at a cost of $1,200. Rev. Mr. Jacobs, for a number of years janitor at the Normal, is pastor. He is a thorough worker, and of good natural abilities. The Church have entered the house under very promising auspices. There is a debt resting upon the purchase. They look to the benevolent in our city and elsewhere to aid them.

> There is a Ladies Aid Society, whose object it is to take care of the sick and bury the stranger dead. It meets once a week for moral improvement. Rev. H. Jacobs is President of the society. The colored people seem to be thriving.---They are well dressed, have a fair supply of money, and are evidently on the car of progress. The school room built for their use by the city is well filled. Take the local paper, make yourselves intelligent and you will succeed.

John Brown's raid helped to whip pro and con slavery feelings among Ypsilantians to a frenzy. One indication of the division of opinion may be found in the 606 vote majority given to Abraham Lincoln in the election. It is important to note, however, that there were many votes in opposition. For those on the side of the North the battle cry was the preservation of the Union at all costs. This resulted in many enlistments of white youths in various fighting units.

Chapter Five

"To Preserve the Union...and Free the Slaves"

With the outbreak of civil war, African Americans of Ypsilanti, like those in all non-slaveholding states, were anxious to offer their services for what they immediately perceived as an opportunity to prove their worth. But President Lincoln had other ideas. Even the offer of some to serve as laborers was refused. It was not until the latter part of 1862, with many battles going against the North, and a realization that the South was using blacks effectively, that the President decided to permit blacks to enlist. The Emancipation Proclamation went into effect on January 1, 1863, setting slaves free in all states which were part of the rebellion.

Negro units were now formed in several states, with recruitment taking place in Detroit. Volunteers traveled from all over to enlist. Over fifty of the enlistees gave Ypsilanti as their home address. Some for various reasons joined units in other states, such as Ohio and Indiana. The following list was culled from a listing which appeared in the Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress (1915):

AFRICAN AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS FROM YPSILANTI, 1863-1865

Name	Date of Enlistment	Company	Age
Anderson, John	Feb. 28, 1865	A	30
Bonson, Dandridge	Jan. 14, 1864	I	26
Bowls, John	Feb. 15, 1865	A	32
Carter, William H.	Nov. 15, 1863	F	18
Cross, Joseph	Feb. 26, 1864	F	19
Davis, Thomas J.	Feb. 20, 1865	B	44
Embrose, William	Feb. 15, 1865	C	32
Gay, John	Nov. 14, 1863	C	34
Goins, Daniel	Oct. 29, 1863	C	18
Gray, John E.	Feb. 10, 1864	C	22
Grayson, Henry	Dec. 19, 1863	F	19
Harper, Benjamin	Nov. 30, 1863	F	20
Hart, John K.	Feb. 17, 1865	C	30
Hawkins, Washington	Feb. 15, 1865	C	35

Hays, William	Feb. 4, 1864	C	21
Hopkins, Henry	Dec. 5, 1863	E	18
Hyatt, James	Jan. 11, 1864	K	18
Johnson, Sylvester	Dec. 23, 1863	G	18
Johnson, William C.	Apr. 1 1865	D	43
Jones, William R.	Feb. 20, 1865	G	44
King, William	Jan. 27, 1864	K	19
Lake, Henry	Jan. 24, 1864	K	18
Leake, Frederick	Feb. 10, 1864	C	25
Lewis, Robert E.	Mar. 23, 1865	D	40
Lewis, William B.	Mar. 25, 1865	D	18
Long, Frederick	Dec. 24, 1863	G	35
Lowe, Edward	Oct. 22, 1863	C	24
Moore, George H.	Oct. 28, 1863	C	24
Morgan, Joseph H.	Dec. 10, 1863	E	21
Oliver, Jesse	Dec. 7, 1863	F	35
Patton, Jeremiah	Feb. 10, 1865	E	41
Porter, John	Dec. 22, 1863	K	21
Price, John	Sep. 26, 1863	A	25
Pritchard, Isaiah	Jan. 14, 1864	K	20
Ratliff, Albert J.	Nov. 18, 1863	F	18
Scott, Alexander	Dec. 1863	G	36
Scroggins, Alexander	Jan. 13, 1864	K	19
Sterling, Martin	Dec. 14, 1863	F	28
Stewart, Jesse	Jan. 13, 1864	K	18
Thomas, George	Dec. 24, 1863	G	34
Ward, James R.	Dec. 2, 1863	F	28
Washington, George	Jan. 27, 1864	F	21
Washington, William	Feb. 15, 1865	H	25
Watts, Alexander	Feb. 9, 1864	C	35
Weaver, William P.	Dec. 30, 1863	H	27
Wilson, Edward	Feb. 15, 1865	H	35
Wilson, John	Dec. 22, 1863	G	33
Wilson, William H.	Dec. 10, 1863	H	40
Winslow, Oliver	Dec. 14, 1863	F	8
York, George	Dec. 20, 1863	B	15

One of the degrading practices of the time was the pay differential between white and black soldiers. Even the war which was destined to establish a new group of free men did not erase immediately existing discriminatory practices. Oliver Wendell Holmes was one of the voices raised against the $3.50 differential, as did Eliot Norton and General Benjamin Butler. The Army Appropriation Act of 1864 was an effort to remedy the situation.

Black soldiers conducted themselves with valor wherever they went. In some instances it was they who turned the tide of battle. They fought hard, for indeed they knew their cause was just. They believed that the Union must win for the sake of freedom of themselves as well as their brethren still under the yoke of slavery.

Chapter Six

"The Changing Tide"

The death of President Abraham Lincoln had a profound effect upon all the people of Ypsilanti. The Ypsilanti Commercial of April 22, 1865 carried the headline: "THE SEASON OF SORROWING IN YPSILANTI: Reception of the News." "On the morning of Saturday, April 15th, a rumor prevailed on the streets that ABRAHAM LINCOLN and WM. H. SEWARD had been assassinated, but the fearful tidings was not credited until the arrival of the daily papers,which contained the dispatches relative to the sad event. Even then the awful calamity could not be fully realized at once; but hour after hour the horror and grief kept gnawing deeper and deeper into the soul of our community, until lamentation and indignation was upon every lip and in every eye. An order was issued by the mayor to suspend business and drape the city in mourning - and soon our recently joyous city presented a most solemn appearance: the streets lined with festoons of black, the flags at half mast, the bells tolling, and sorrowing groups at every corner discussing the fearful news. We give the full particulars of the tragedy in our news columns.

OBSERVANCES ON SUNDAY

"A tearful Sabbath dawned upon us. Weeping congregations filled all the churches, which were heavily draped in the weeds of mourning. At the Baptist Church, Rev. Mr. Hewitt preached a most impressive sermon from Psalm xcix, 1: 'The Lord Reigneth; let the people tremble,' having preached but a week before from Psalm xcvii, 1: 'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice.' A general meeting was announced for the evening, at which several expressed their feelings upon the dire visitation, among whom were Rev. C. R. Pattison, Prof. Carey, Mr. S. Jenness, Dr. Post, and Capts. Phillips and Stanway. A general feeling prevailed of humiliation before God, and a renewed trust in that Ruler whom no ruthless assassin can deprive us of. It is said there was not a dry eye in the Methodist Church that morning. Rev. Mr. Hickey preached from the passage 'An enemy has done this.' He called us truly orphans,' for we had all 'lost a father in that noble president.' - Rev. Mr. Tindall gave a teaching discourse, drawn from numerous passages of scripture. Here also a general conference was held in the evening .... All retired that night comforted with a renewed confidence in God, and, under Him, is our new President, Andrew Johnson.

THE GENERAL FEELING

"This community felt, the past week that a deep, dark cloud was upon us in tbe form of a calamity such as our country nor the world has ever seen before; but from conferring together, and listening to the counsels of good and holy men, we have come to see this light through all the darkness - That we, as a nation, are now more than ever in the hands of God, and 'all things work together for good to those that love Him.'"

With the Civil War at an end, Ypsilantians turned their thoughts to more appropriate pursuits. But occasionally problems arose which drew attention and were mirrored in the local press. The True Democrat carried the following article on September 16, 1866:

> Four millions of slaves before the war kept down the wages of the poor whites throughout the South; and this operated to degrade and keep down white laborers at the North. The abolition of slavery will increase the wages of every working

> man. The liberated slaves will remain at the South, and the other men will demand as high wages as they can earn. The wages of free labor will be increased throughout the country... When will the working men of the North, who now vote with the Peace Democracy, learn to hate slavery instead of hating the victim.

The voices of black ex-soldiers were joined with others who were championing the causes of freedom at home. Statewide groups came into existence, and Ypsilanti was well represented. Despite the numerous and strong appeals, every effort seemed doomed to failure. An article in The Ypsilanti Commercial of March 16, 1868 was a reflection of growing concerns:

> Our Democratic friends are making a great howl over the supposed invasion of Michigan by colored people after the new Constitution shall be adopted. Answer these few questions and then be convinced of the foolishness of the howls: Why don't the New England States have an overplus of colored people? Why not New York State? Why not Wisconsin? Wisconsin has not unnaturally increased her colored citizens. Will they come from Canada? Canada places the colored citizen on a political equality with the white. Will they come from the South? There they are

> enfranchised. Southern Negro emigration to the North has stopped. The current is not from North to South. The inevitable course of events is toward universal suffrage - universal justice, universal manhood.

Ratification of the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution took place on July 27, 1868, just a few days before the Michigan Legislature took action to provide suffrage for the state's blacks. The opportunity to take any effective or meaningful action was thus forfeited by the Legislature. The federal action was succint, clear, and easy to understand:

> No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

In Ypsilanti, as in other places, the federal law would move opponents of such rights to action. A later generation of citizens would try to destroy any previous progress, and work to return the Negro to previous conditions of servitude.

One of the vehicles employed by blacks to advance themselves was the Mass Meeting. Even during slavery there had been several such meetings, sometimes called conventions. These usually ended with lists of grievances, or demands, presented to govenmental authorities. After the Civil War some of these mass meetings were poilitical in nature. One took place in 1867, and was reported in the Ypsilanti True Democrat:

> COLORED MASS MEETING — Last Thursday evening at Hewitt Hall was a grand success. The Hall was filled to its fullest capacity. It was one of those things that must be seen and heard, to be appreciated. We have heard more logical and elegant speeches, but there was zeal, enthusiasm,earnestness,and what is best of all, it was in the right direction. John Richards, of Detroit, made a telling speech. Mr. Hill of Manchester, spoke with good effect. Mr. Lewis Clarke, who is the original Geo. Harris of "Uncle Tom," was one of the last of the speakers. It is not the easiest to report his speech; it was full of good bits, illustrating the excellent qualities of Gen. Grant, and the unfitness of Greeley for the Presidency. Sojourner Truth, of Battle Creek, was called to the stand. She thought it useless to talk about Greeley. All his own speeches told against him, and if we would let him alone, he would get out of the way himself. She ad-

> vocated woman suffrage,and promised another speech on that topic at another time. The Ypsilanti Glee Club added largely to the enthusiasm of the meeting. Grant and the speakers were cheered enough to make up for the want of all such things the evening before.

General Ulysses S. Grant, who had led the Northern Forces in the war, was quickly elevated to near martyrdom, next to President Lincoln, throughout the the North, and Ypsilanti was no exception. Grant Clubs were efforts to keep alive the promises of the war as they under-understood them. The significant point to this was the active participation in the political questions of the day by people whose past was rooted in slavery. Greeley represented a party which, in their view, favored reenslavement.

The Ypsilanti Commercial continued to provide good coverage on subjects of great interest to African Americans. As early as 1866 (October 27), an editorial appeared under the title, "Attention Colored Voters." On March 30, 1867, the editor opinionized on "Time Changes, Yesterday a Slave, Today a Citizen." That issue also carried a letter, "A Negro's Gratitude." On June 1, an article appered entitled, "The Safety of Negro Soldiers." On September 5, 1868, support for Grant was announced by a "Pole-Raising for Grant and Colfax." The March 9, 1869 issue carried a letter from Virgil M. Ward on his experiences as a slave in Virginia. The April 2, 1870 issue carried a "Speech from [a] colored senator from Mississippi."A parade was held on April 23, 1870 in observance of the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution. This was followed by all day meetings at Hewitt Hall by the colored people of the city.

The Post Civil War period challenged the new citizens in other ways too. Some of the former indentureds who had fled to Canada were now returning to the United States. Many were drawn to Ypsilanti where they became a significant portion of the colored population. There was also a good mix of blacks who were free before the war.

Shedding the fetters of the pre-Civil War days meant taking advantage of opportunities to better themselves. The formation of Grant Clubs was one kind of expression. The first one grew out of meeting on August 10, 1870, at the First Ward School House on Adams Street. The major address was delivered by D. Greene "upon the political issues of the day." The club members heard remarks by S. Post who delivered a "brief but spirited address." After remarks by S. H. Wells and T. J. Davis, a resolution was passed which showed "that the colored citizens of Ypsilanti cannot follow the advice of Charles Sumner:

> Whereas, Charles Sumner, moved by Personal hostility to President Grant, has lately advised the colored voters of the United States to cast their suffrage in the ensuing Presidential election for Horace Greeley; therefore Resolved,

> That, we, the colored voters of Ypsilanti, gratefully remembering his past services, view with sorrow his defection from our friends to our enemies.
> Resolved, That, In our opinion, all roads out of the Republican party lead into the Democratic camp, and therefore we cannot follow the outgoing steps of any man, however true to us in the past. Resolved, That in our judgment,the welfare of our people demands the re-election of U. S. Grant, and the continuance in power of the Republican party, which first emancipated and then enfranchised our race."

A second club was organized on August 3. 1872. Also held at the First Ward School, Benjamin Collins was "called to the Chair." B.H. Wells was elected President, Solomon Bow, Vice-President, T. S. Roadman, Secretary, and William Duncan, Treasurer. Stirring speeches were delivered by Eli Leatherman of Jackson, S. H. Wells, J. K. Hart. Over thirty names were enrolled.

The December 23, 1871, issue of the **The Ypsilanti Commercial** carried an item of unusual interest. An "All colored Jury - before Justice Van Cleve - Something New Here." Again, on March 17, 1875, the **Ann Arbor Courier** carried this item:

> Sanford H. Wells, the colored juror from Ypsilanti,served for the first time in the Circuit Court on Tues-

> day last in the case of Douglas, Mallory & Co. vs. Lyon. Mr. Wells makes a very intelligent juror and Ypsilanti may well be proud of him.

The following year, Wells, "the oldest barber in Ypsilanti," sold out to his partner, Mr. Butler, and left for California. **The Commercial** gave the address of the shop as 176 Congress.

Chapter Seven

"Settling In With Freedom"

About 1870 the Edfert Bow family moved to town. He was accompanied by his brother, Solomon Bow. They had recently lived in Massachusetts, but listed Maine as their birth place. In short order, the Bows, some of whom were to become well known as skilled carpenters and wood workers, were soon well known leaders in the community. Bow's Grocery was established at 50 Washington Street, where it thrived for two decades.

Elijah McCoy was by this time was settled down, and on July 23, 1872, received his first patent for a lubrication device. On August 6, a second patent was received. The first one was assigned to S. C. Hamlin to secure funds to continue his work. The Ypsilanti Commercial of July 21, 1872 quoted William G. Shipman, a local engineer and honored veteran of the Civil War, as saying: "I have been using Elijah McCoy's Patent Lubricating Cup for some time and pronounce it the very best lubricating cup I have ever used." The same article announced the formation of McCoy and Hamlin Company for the purpose of manufacturing and selling McCoy-made products. S. R. Williams was later quoted: "The automatic sight-feed lubrication, when it first came on the market, was not favorably received by engineers, who dubbed it a 'nigger oilcup' because a 'coon' invented it first. Railroad officials from throughout the country visited Ypsilanti, and particularly McCoy, to acquaint themselves with the new oil cup and find out how to install it on their locomotives and other large engines. This was the period of the Industrial Revolution, and the general awakening of such possibilities was more or less expected.

The Ypsilanti Commercial, April 18, 1874, carried an announcement of the formation of a "Colored Band," with T. Bow as President, C. H. Anderson, Vice-President, L. Thompson, Secretary, and E. Thomas, Assistant Secretary. Members included R. H. Motaw, R. H. Artist, W. R. Jones, W. H. Morris, W. T. Brown, and C. Hicks. The August 22 issue carried a brief mention of the band's first concert. The **Commercial**, October 30, 1875, carried the following:

> The Colored Band a few evenings since gave Mayor Barnes a fine serenade. The band are [sic] $25.00 richer, isn't that the right kind of appreciation? The same evening they serenaded Mr. S. Post. They were invited in, and treated to a capital supper.

In 1875, the Ypsilanti Union Cornet Band was organized and was featured in Tbe Commercial following a concert in April, 1876. Both of the above bands were likely featured at " The Great Celebration," with 2000 colored citizens in attendance in August, 1876. The speaker was E. P. Allen.

A state leader in the Prince Hall Masonic movement was William Isaac Burdine, the supervising teacher in the Adams Street School. He had come to the village shortly after the completion of the new building, relieving John Hall of the school's supervision. The thirty year old would make a great impression on the colored people of Ypsilanti over the next few years. He became active in the African Methodist Episcopal Society, and a strong member of the Prince Hall Masonic group. At the 1870 meeting in Lansing, Burdine was elected Grand Master.

The Ypsilanti Commercial of January 6, 1877 reported, "After long service as teacher of the First Ward School, Mr. I. Burdine steps down and out, and Miss Susie Gorton takes his place." A note in the August 3, 1890, issue of The Plaindealer of Detroit reported his return to Terre Haute, Indiana, "for the purpose of opening his school at Lost Creek." Before his departure from his position in the Ypsilanti schools, a citation was presented to him which read as follows:

To Mr. Isaac Burdine
In appreciation of the services
rendered by him to the AME Church
Society and the Sabbath School,
these Reminiscences are respectfully
inscribed.

It should also be noted that John Fox, an attorney, set up practice on Michigan Avenue in 1878. He also served as an insurance agent. Fox grew up in Pittsfield Township, west of the town in the home of Nathan Follett. He attended high school in Ypsilanti, and graduated from the University of Michigan. In the 1883 Ypsilanti City Directory, his office was listed as on the "n e cor Huron & Congress." He died at age 32, in 1886.

African American efforts to acclimate themselves to the new freedom was expressed in other ways. The Knights Templars gave a leap year ball in April, 1884. A Colored County Convention brought leaders together to map political strategies to improve the condition of their group. The newspaper reported in an article on March 22 that "The Negro [is] traveling upward...."

A large number of local citizens attended an "Emancipation Celebration" in Ann Arbor in August of 1884. On August 2, 1886 it met again in Ypsilanti, and the paper gave a fairly complete report of "how the colored people of Ypsilanti celebrated." The "Colored Masons" held another state meeting in Ypsilanti in January 1888. A Young Men's Metropolitan Glee Club gave a ball in April, announced in the April 6 issue of the local paper. Early in the year, the local paper announced the formation of a Ladies Leap Year Club. A "Colored Evangelistic Association" was formed in August of 1886 to produce camp meetings.

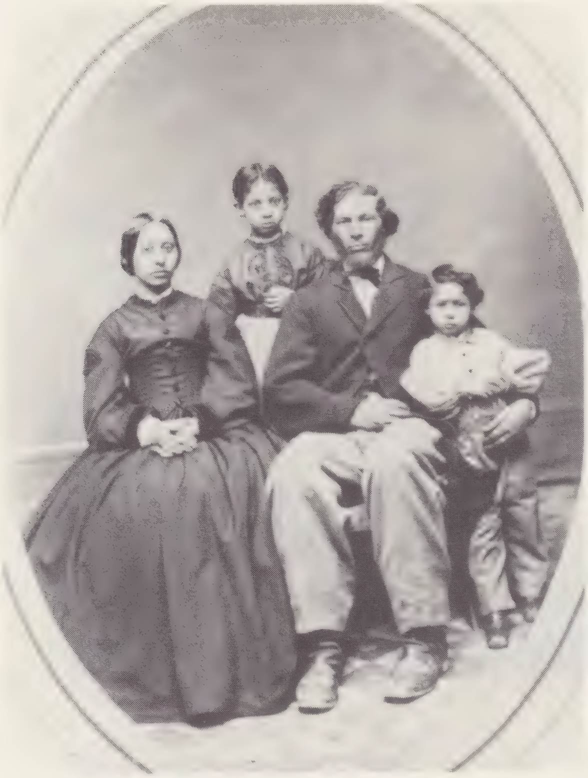
Prominent space on Page 1 was given to the

"Colored Minstrel, a local group," on April 12, 1889. In August, the annual Emancipation Day was called a "Red Letter Day," by the press, with the leaders promising to out do any previous efforts. At Christmas, a masquerade party was held at the Light Guard Hall.

Though the Bows had operated a grocery store on Washington Street since the early 1870s, the Ypsilanti City Directory of 1883 listed a second grocery, operated by Daniel P. Davis. It was located on the northeast corner of West Congress and Adams Streets.

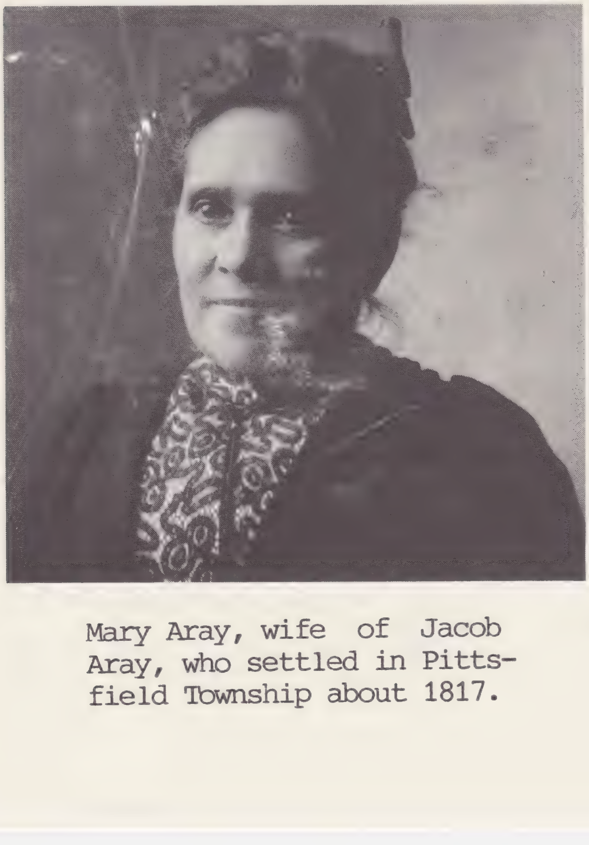
The first day of August continued to be a day of celebration of emancipation throughout the Midwest. On August 9, 1873, The Ypsilanti Commercial carried the following item on its front page:

> August 1st Celebration.
> In Canada, the colored brethren had the greatest celebration they have ever had. In this city it exceeded the expectations of the projectors. The Stoney Creek Band furnished gleeful music, and headed the procession, which paraded a few of the streets. Young ladies dressed in white and carrying banners, on which were inscribed the state represented by each, accompanied the procession. Speeches were made at the Fair Grounds by Rev. Messrs. Fuller, Boyden, and Bass, and Hon. W. C. Carter...The day of our colored people to celebrate, is the day when the 15th Amendment was announced as



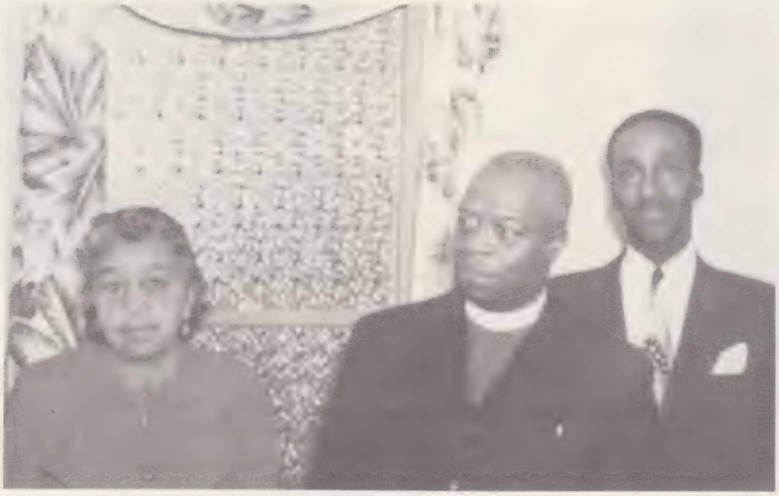
The Day Family of Pittsfield Township in the 19th century. (l.to.r.) Martha Aray Day, Alice Day, Benjamin Day, and Herbert T. Day. (Courtesy of Mrs. L. L. Bradley).

D. E. Baptiste, known for his anti-slavery efforts in Indiana and Michigan.

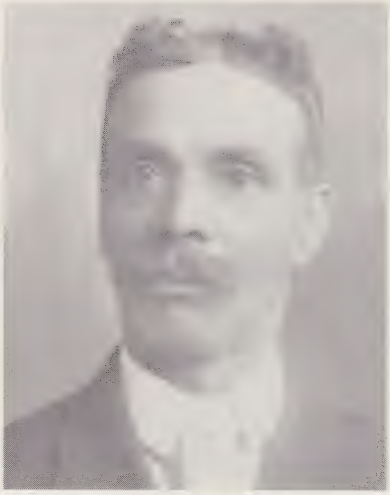


Mary Aray, wife of Jacob Aray, who settled in Pittsfield Township about 1817.

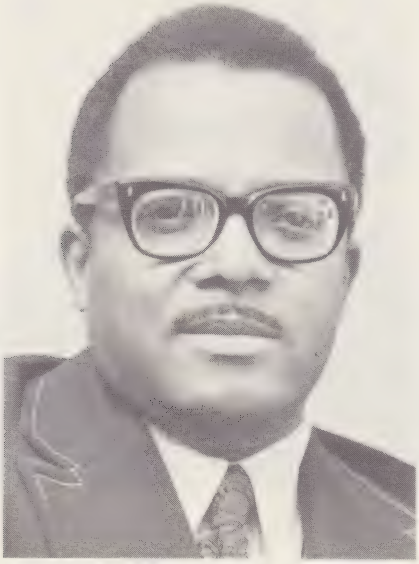
Elijah McCoy, an Ypsilanti High School grad, who became a famous lubrication expert and inventor.



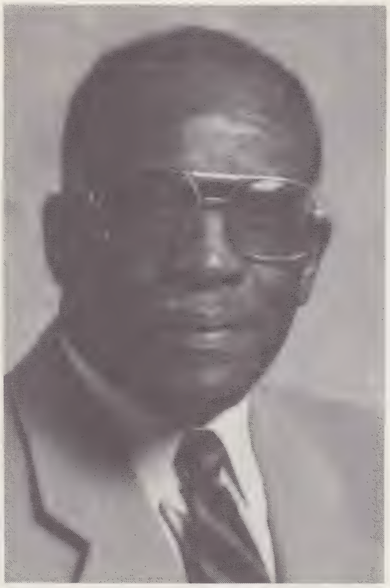
BERNICE KERSEY HOFFMAN, teacher at Adams Street School, and later at Harriet Street School, was also organist at Brown Chapel. Shown with her is the Reverend Thomas H. Smith, and Sunday School Superintendent, John Aldridge.



Egbert Bow, prominent member of family which settled in Ypsilanti in the 1870s.



NORMAN KENNEDY, City Councilman, 1971-1973



LEO CLARK, School Principal and civic activist, son of the late Dr. and Mrs. Samuel F. Clark.

> part and parcel of the Constitution of the United States.

Apparently this celebration grew in popularity each year, for announcements appeared each August. Anticipation for the coming celebration on August 2, 1886, shows that at least some of the townsfolk looked forward to it. In the Ypsilanti Commercial on July 7, 1886, appeared the following:

> The colored citizens of Ypsilanti have decided to hold a grand celebration here August 2d. Our business men have come to time, and subscription paper represents the necessary cash, although further contributions would not come amiss: Hon. H. P. Jacobs, of Natchez, Tenn., Hon. E. P. Allen, and other orators. Look out for striking posters to be printed by the only office in Ypsilanti capable of turning out first class work of this description. Let all lend a helping hand and show the large crowds who will gather here what our beautiful city can do.

Such articles as those appearing in the daily newspapers have significance in that they reflected efforts by editors and publishers to encourage public opinion in favor of the new citizens. Another generation would give in to the wave of hate already gathering on the horizon. Proud Ypsilanti would "show what our beautiful city can do." This was a belief of the city's founding fathers who aimed to have a city based on the words of the Declaration of Independence and the U. S. Constitution. It is clear that the spread of hatred against blacks had not yet permeated so deeply into Ypsilanti. The August 6, 1886 issue of The Ypsilanti Commercial carried this front page story:

> Monday, the 1st of August, was a gala day with the colored people of Ypsilanti. The Michigan Mutual Benevolent Society of Good Samaritans joined with the communities having charge of the celebration, which went far toward the success of the enterprise.
> Early Monday morning strange faces were seen from the neighboring towns, and continued to come on every train, though not very great numbers were seen...Most of the people came from Ann Arbor and Jackson, a few coming from Toledo. The procession formed at the corner of Adams and Cross streets, shortly after 10 o'clock. They marched down Congress and up River street, where they waited the arrival of the train from both ways, and then forming on Cross St., marched to Huron, down Huron and up Congress to Fair Grounds, where the celebration was held...The noticeable feature of the procession was the wagon of girls, each dressed in white, wearing red, white and blue. The Goddess of Liberty sat at the pinnacle of the pyramid shaped wagon. Each one wore

the name of some state. The procession was headed by the Dexter Juvenile Band, who furnished the music for the occasion. The boys gave good satisfaction. Upon arrival at the grounds, dinner was served. The exercises were opened in the afternoon by music by the band. Prayer was offered by Rev. T. W. McLean in absence of Rev Mr. Alexander. Mayor Cornwell delivered the address of welcome and was followed by a speech by Hon. E. P. Allen. ....Hon. H. P. Jacobs of Natchez, Miss., a former slave, and a resident of Ypsilanti for years, took the floor and gave an address of some length, dwelling mostly on the needs of the colored race today, although opening his oration by handsome remarks upon what the celebration was held for, and giving a short history of slavery. He spoke of the brave record of the colored people, showing that they were as brave as any race of men "that walked on two legs." We hear a good deal about "how to solve the nigger problem." I will tell you how: "Let him alone." You will see him filling the highest positions in the U. S. Let him work that out for himself..... The athletic sports of the day consisted of ball playing and foot races. The ball game between the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti nines ended in quite a rangle. Dissatisfaction with the umpire's decision caused it. The game

> was stopped. There were two foot races run. First was a fifty yards which was entered by J. Barton, Detroit, who came in first; J. Cunningham, Milford, 2nd; Clements, 3rd. The 100 yards' race resulted as follows: J. Burton, 1st; J. Cunningham 2nd, M. Roberts, Rawsonville, 3rd.

From the "Looking Backward" column of the _Ypsilanti Press_, August 8, 1969, the following item was noted:

> Ypsilanti Commercial, August 8, 1894 - Canada, which ranked right next to heaven as the promised land for American slaves, was the scene of a massive Emancipation Day celebration last week. A special 6-coach train from Ann Arbor made the Canadian run, carrying with it 130 of Ypsilanti's colored people.

Chapter Eight

"Dreams Deferred"

The African American population of the City of Ypsilanti in 1880, according to official estimates was 440. In comparison, the Census found 300 living in Ann Arbor. Ypsilanti was still the preferred place to live by maligned people of color. Several of the darker citizens were trying their hands at entrepreneurship, including the Bows, Daniel Davis, Sanford Wells, Robert Morton, and Richard Spafford. Solomon Bow, Benjamin Collins, and George Kersey were kept busy with their building skills, while Jesse Newton repaired shoes for a living.

Elijah McCoy had moved to Detroit in 1878, and John Hall continued making barrels. Earl Eaton and William Tolliver were brick masons, and Jonathan D. Curry and Greenberry Pope were teamsters. Most of the others gave their occupations as either farm laborers or laborers. Some women had begun to enter the labor market, listing themselves as domestics, laundresses, or servants. Mrs. Isaac Stewart was listed as a gardener. Charles Mashat was listed as well digger.

The Ypsilanti City Directory of 1883 gives some ide a of where African Americans were living and what they were doing some eighteen years after emancipation.

Ambrose, Wm., laborer, res. 1 and 2 W.

Congress.
Andrews, Mrs. Wealthy, laundress, New Hawkins House.
Artis, Archibald, laborer, res. n s Ellis, 2 d w city limits.
Bailey, Alexander, asst. janitor, State Normal School, res 82 Cross
Bass, Samuel, res 67 S. Grove
Beckwith, Wm., carpenter, res. 55 Harriet, 2 d w s Washington
Boles, Miss Martha, bds Joseph Tibbles
Bow, Edgar, grocer, res 50 S. Washington
Bowles, John, laborer, res. 52 S Adams
Bowles, Wm., laborer, 52 S Adams
Braumwell, Rev. James Wm., pastor, Second Baptist Church, res 20 W. Willis
Britton, Wm., laborer, res 555 Buffalo
Brooks, Adam B. night watchman, LS & MSRR, res 43 N. Ballard
Brooks, Jacob, wks. J. W. Babbitt
Burley, John, farmer, res w s More Avenue
Calbert, Henry, laborer, res 49 Perrin
Charter, Louis, laborer, res 51 S. Adams
Collins, Isaac, laborer, res foot S. Huron
Cooley, Elias, barber, e s Ninde, 1 d n e Cross, res same
Cunningham, Maria, domestic, Tubal G. Owen
Davis, Daniel P., groceries and confectionary, n e cor W. Congress and Adams
Day, Ephraim, laborer, res e s Race, 5 d s Catherine
DeHazen, Robert, barber, Newell Block
Douglass, Samuel, laborer, res s s Ellis,

2 d w city limits

Dow, Lorenzo, res w s 1st Ave, 5 d s Catherine

Eaton, James, res 55 S. Adams

Eaton, Jane, wid. Earle, res. n s Ellis, 1 d w city limits

Edwards, Adeline, (wid. Wm.) 37 S. Adams

Edwards, George, laborer, bds. 37 S. Adams

Ellis, Mrs. Catherine, res 24 S. Adams

Evans, Major, laborer, res 36 Emmet

Fox, John, lawyer and insurance agt., n e cor Huron and Congress, bds Hawkins House room 13 N. Huron

Gaines, Woodford, laborer,res 24 E Congress

Gordon, Joseph, laborer, res w s Race, 2 ds Catherine

Hamilton, John, laborer, bds Robert Johnson

Hamilton, Richard, res 58 S. Adams

Harper, Mrs. Josephine, bds Mrs.Isa Stewart

Harris, Reuben, carpenter, bds.Wm. Beckwith

Harrison, Oliver, waiter, New Hawkins House

Hart, Harriet, wid Edward, res 82 W. Congress

Hawkins, George, laborer, bds Washington Hawkins

Hayes, George, laborer, res w s Morse Ave

Hayes, Miss Ida, bds 68 S. Washington

Henson, Oliver, porter, First National

Bank, res 26 E. Congress
Hill, Caroline, (wid Matthew) res Allen 1 d e Center
Hill, Robert, porter, Harrison Fairchild, res 70 S. Grove
Jarvis & York, (Robert M. Jarvis, Thomas A. York) barbers, s e cor Congress and Huron
Jarvis, Robert M. Jarvis & York, re 13 N. Huron
Johnson, Mrs. Frances, weaver, bds 46 S. Washington
Johnson, Hester, (wid Joseph) res w s Ninde, 1 d s E. Cross
Johnson, Miss Josephine, bds 49 Perrin
Johnson, Robert, laborer, res w s Ninde
Johnson, Samuel, barber, George Witmire, res 16 Babbitt
Johnson, Wm., wks Alva L. Reynolds, res. w s Ninde, 3 d s E Cross
Johnston, Frankie, laundress, New Hawkins House
Johnston, Hattie, posting cook, New Hawkins House
Johnston, Sarah, (wid Wm.) res 46 S. Washington
Jones, Arthur, laborer, res S. Hamilton 2 d e Buffalo
Jones, Miss Jennie, bds 29 S. Adams
Jones, Riley, laborer, res 29 S. Adams
Jones, Wm. R., porter, Lewis House
King, Wm., rag peddler, res 39 S. Adams
Lang, John, laborer, res w s Morse Ave on Ballard
Ledow, Parthania, cook Lewis House
McCoy, Anna (wid Harvey M.) McCoy &

Thompson res 13 N. Huron

McCoy, Milly, (wid George) res 167 W. Congress

McCoy, Wm. M., Coachman,res 167 W.Congress Mark, Moses, res 5 Harris

Martin, Hattie, (wid Sandy) res n e cor Buffalo and S. Adams

Mashat, Charles H., well digger, res s s Ann Arbor Rd. 1 d w city limits

Mashat, George A. bds. ss Ann Arbor Road, 1 d w city limits

Merchant, Mrs. Cora, domestic, Prof. F. H. Pease

Miller, Charles, night porter, Lewis House

Mofford, Miss Mary E. hair work and hair dresser, n e cor Congress & Washington, Hewitt Blk, res 19 S. Adams

Moore, Charles, laborer, res n s Mill, nr Harriet

Moore, Wm., res e s Morse Ave, nr Harriet

Morries, George, laborer, res n s Mill, 1 d e River

Newton, Peter, laborer, res w s Morse Ave., nr Harriet

Norris, Beverly, laborer, res n e cor Buffalo & Hamilton

Patten, Jeremiah, laborer, res w s 1st 4 d s Harriet

Pollard, Wm., laborer, res 46 S. Adams

Poole, Alfred, laborer, res ss Harriet, 2 d w s Washington

Poole, Alpheus, engineer, res s s

Harriet, 2 d w Washington

Porter, William, laborer, res s s Harriet, 3 d w Washington

Prince, Edward N. carpenter, 85 E Congress

Robinson, Frances E. bds 28 Ballard

Robinson, Wm., laborer, res w s Race, 2 d s Catherine

Roper, Edward, wks G. E. Whitmore, bds Adam Moore

Schaefer, George, harness shop, res e w cor W. Congress & S. Hamilton

Simpson, Levi, carpenter, res w s Morse Ave nr Harriet

Slater, Simon, bds Wm. Britton Sparks, Charles, laborer, res 83 Grove

Stewart, Isa (widow Jessie), res s w cor Buffalo, & S. Adams

Streeter, Nichols, carpenter, res e s Morse Ave, nr Harriet

Thompson, Alonzo, laborer, res 43 N Ballard

Thompson, Rev. Henry, pastor ME Church, res s s Buffalo, 1 d e Adams

Thompson, Miss Lulu M. (McCoy & Thompson) bds Harry H. Thompson

Thompson, Robert E. laborer, res 28 Ballard

Tibbles, Joseph, farmer, res w s 1st Ave, 1 d n Harriet

Toliver, Amanda, (wid Wm.) cook, New House Hawkins

Travis, Wm. lamp-lighter, res 11 Miles

Warren, John, mason, res e s Normal, 1 d s W. Congress

Washington, James, barber, bds 10 S.

Grove

Washington, Miss Mary, bds Mrs. Margaret Washington

Webster, Alexander, wks Lewis House

Wilson, Edwin, teamster, res 8 s Hamilton

Wilson, Patsey, domestic, 18 Pearl

Wilson, Robert, laborer, res e s Morse Ave nr Harriet

Wilson, Thomas, laborer, bds Joseph Gordon

Winfrey, Thomas, engineer Adam Cooper, res cor River & Cook

Woods, Charles, Sr., laborer, res e s River nr Forest Ave

York, Thomas A. (James & York), res 85 E. Congress

With most of their white friends of pre-Civil War days gone, the influence of rising hate groups became more pronounced, with much less resistance. This began to interfere in substantial ways with social and economic progress of the years since the war. While Booker T. Washington was urging young blacks to secure training in trades as a way of economic advancement, color prejudice was usurping their entrance into the ranks of those kind of workers. Locally, however, the rate of job loss was much less than in some other places. The major concern was the increasing denial of opportunity to live like other members of the society. Within a few years a feeling arose that there was little reason thus thwarted on every hand.

to make any efforts to progress. Among whites, the idea of looking askance at Negro complaints caught on quickly. Soon it was popular to deny rights to these bondsmen who "didn't deserve any more than they had." Incomes which would allow better standards of living somehow were seen as threats to the way of life of white citizens. Gradually even socializing with the "coloreds" was an acceptable taboo. Those who insisted on doing so were called by all sorts of names, "nigger lovers" being one of the most popular.

Psychological effects of such treatment was devastating to a people who had striven to reach a point of respectability. But without knowing it, African Americans as a group relied upon an inner strength, built over years of dehumanization which enabled them to survive at all costs.

This is not to deny the aura of hate which slowly permeated the entire country after the Civil War, eventually entering Ypsilanti. Stores which previously welcomed their business were forced by popular demand to withdraw such privileges to the darker citizen. Almost everywhere there were efforts to degrade, to punish, to withdraw even those rights and privileges which had come to be expected. White laborers began to insist on holding the better jobs and to relegate to the darker citizen the lower paying and least respectful work. Earnings by blacks were kept low in an effort "to keep the Negro in his place." The desires of blacks were

According to the (Detroit) Plaindealer of February 21, 1890, a boxing school was operating in Ypsilanti. This was another attempt to adjust to changing conditions. When new opportunities for adjustment and growth of a people should have been developing, there was a withdrawal, a clamping down, of helping hands, a systematic denial of rights which previously seemed about to happen. The aura of hate which began to permeate the entire country shortly after emancipation gradually moved into the City.

The Supreme Court of the United States not only affirmed discrimination in Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896), but also encouraged the growth and spread of other ridiculous measures, usually designed to degrade, and to deny the development of any self esteem.

With fewer opportunities for advanceement, and with most incentives seemingly withdrawn, blacks found training and education useless to pursue. At least that was the end result. Though some opportunities were continuously forged by those strongly motivated to do so, the average black child and his parents saw the immediate future as bleak, and could visualize little real opportunity. Even so, there were some few, who, despite hindrances, did pursue higher training.

LOUIS SLATER BOWLES

Louis Slater Bowles completed Central high school, and then enrolled at Xenia, Ohio's Wilberforce University. The son of John H. and Sarah H. Bowles, with his diploma in hand, went to Kentucky, where he established McKinney Institute in 1902, with only $50.00. The school grew rapidly, and within ten years boasted of equipment valued at $30,000, and land valued $8,500. In the 1914/1915 school year there were 340 students enrolled.

CARRIE M. HAYES BOW

Carrie M. Hayes Bow is credited with being the first black to complete studies at Cleary College (1903). She was the granddaughter of Jesse and Isa Stewart, and the daughter of George Hayes. She worked three years as a stenographer and bookkeeper for Dr. Sam Goldberg in Detroit. She then returned to Ypsilanti to care for her ailing father, who had been a fireman at Michigan State Normal. She later became the wife of Egbert Bow, the son of Solomon Bow. Many descendents of the Bow family continue to reside in and around Ypsilanti.

THE VINSON NATHANIEL STARKS FAMILY

In 1904, the Vinson Nathaniel Starks family moved to Ypsilanti, bringing two daughters and a son. Both girls completed training at Michigan Normal, but blacks were systematically discouraged from the teaching profession, and certificates were never issued. Viola Starks Carter, the younger of the two, became a nurse in the office of Dr. John Dickerson. After the doctor's death in 1929, Viola went into private practice.Martha Starks Neely reared a remarkable family, one of whom is Mary of Mary Louise Neely Foley, a dedicated civil rights activist. Patricia N. McCurdy lives in Windsor and teaches at St. Clair College. The two boys are Howard Neely, Jr., a teacher/coach, and Willard Neely. a realtor in Ann Arbor.

Using the **Ypsilanti City Directory** for 1889 as a source, the occupations most prevalent in Ypsilanti ten years before the turn of the century were:

Barber	2
Butcher	1
Carpenter	5
Club Manager	1
Coachman	1
Cooks	6
Core Maker	1
Cupola Tender	1
Driver	1
Engineer	1
Fireman	1
Grocer	1
House mover	1
Ice Cream Maker	1
Mason	8
Miller	1
Painter	2
Preacher	2
Saloon Owner	1
Stoker	1
Stove Repairer	1
Teacher	1
Teamster	5

Most blacks were laborers, or unskilled workers. There were smatterings of servants, launderers, and janitors in the population. These had become the "available" jobs in the "new order," without much chance for advancement. There were also two listings of "rooming houses."

Chief among employers in the city at the turn of the century were the following:

- Clayton & Lambert Mfg. Co. (gasoline and hot air)
- Foerster Brewing Co. (Beer)
- Hay & Todd Mfg. Co. (Underwear)
- Iron Mountain Water Works (Water supplies)
- McCullough Foundry
- Ray's Wagon Mfg. Co.
- Scharf Tag & Box Co.
- Ypsilanti Dairy Association.
- Ypsilanti Dress Stay Mfg. Co.
- Ypsilanti Electric Co.
- Ypsilanti Gas Co.
- Ypsilanti Lumber Co.
- Ypsilanti Machine Works.

The University of Michigan employed many black Americans in various positions, such as cooks and maids in fraternity and sorority houses and janitors. Michigan Normal employed a few cooks, janitors, and firemen. Though both institutions permitted enrollment of Negroes as students, hiring them in professional and teaching positions was beyond consideration at that time.

The "giant" was quiet for the moment, but certainly aware of the future potential. The militants, some on the local scene, were bold in their efforts to stifle progress towards equal human rights for African Americans. A new day would emerge in time, however, when the deprived would step forward to demand all the rights due them.

Chapter Nine

"A Gradual Awakening"

From the view of the black American, Ypsilanti remained one of the better places to live, even in the face of increasing animosity. Perhaps the foundation philosophies of the early settlers remained imbedded in the city's psyche, making for an encouraging and hopeful future. The early years of the twentieth century were used to acquire habits which were usually expected of white folks.

African Americans came together often to entertain themselves in a variety of ways. In their social clubs they recited poetry, enjoyed musical renditions by members and invited guests, participated in declamations, and practiced any activity

With African Americans being gradually shut out of the local press by this time, it became the practice for black newspapers such as The Plaindealer, to accomodate local news items. In this way the circulations of their papers expanded, and the hope of additional revenue from advertisers might be realized. However, much of the leadership for any future progress would come from newcomers to the city rather than from the so-called natives.

WILLIAM PAUL CLAY

From Warsaw, Indiana came a young man who was destined to play an important role in the future of African Americans. To him it was necessary to fight in order to right the obvious wrongs existing in Ypsilanti.

His name was William Paul Clay, and he brought his bride, the former Virginia Bell Scott of Chatham, Ont. to live here. They had first lived in Pontiac, but later moved to Ypsilanti to work for the Lock Pattern Company. Later he would establish his own landscaping and gardening service. Perhaps his desire for a community in which his children could have a better future caused him to become one of the city's leading civil rights activists. He was a charter member of the Ypsilanti Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, established in 1917. His calls for help to the national organization brought field agents to counsel and advise the local group.

Efforts by the local Board of Education to extend classes in the First Ward or Adams Street School beyond the fourth grade ended in court. Attorney Charles M'Honey of Detroit was engaged by the organization, and the proposal was defeated. The school was closed in 1920.

In 1924, the Board opened the Harriet Street School, basing its actions on the "neighborhood concept." Clay participated in several movements to attack other efforts at discrimination and segregation, though supporters were often scarce. In effect, he was a forerunner to Martin Luther King, Jr., for he could not rest under any semblance of inequality.

He was involved in the picketing of Hessenaurs on Washtenaw over discriminatory hiring practices. Until his death in 1966, he remained a leading local advocate for equality of all people. Though his voice was stilled, he had lived to see many undesirable practices corrected, and was delighted to see kind of advancements for which he had fought so long.

SAMUEL ASA RICHARDSON

Another indication of changing times was the establishment of the city's first African American-owned funeral home. This event caused a gradual decline in the number of burials of African Americans in Highland Cemetery. Prior to this there were few voiced objections to their burial along with whites. Whatever the reasons, African Americans saw the change as an indication of a growth in prejudice in the community.

Samuel Asa Richardson's grand-father, was born "somewhere in the South." He ended up in Maine where he was a "house boy" to a white family who treated him as one of them. With his light complexion he had privileges so often denied others of African background. When he became an adult he married Margaret McGinnis, "a woman from

Scotland." The couple eventually moved to Chatham, Ontario. Sam's father, Joseph Henry Richardson, was born at Charing Cross, a community near Chatham, and his mother was born near Dresden. Samuel was born on February 17, 1900, in Chatham.

The family moved to the Ypsilanti area while Sam was a small child, purchasing a farm on the southwest corner of Hitchingham and Merritt Roads. They family later moved to another farm at Judd and Hitchingham Roads, before eventually moving into the city. After completing Ypsilanti High School, Sam enrolled at Michigan State Normal, but after two years, an opportunity came to become an apprentice mortician, so he withdrew. After receiving his certificate he attended a summer program for morticians at the University of Michigan. In 1924 he opened the first "black-owned undertaking establishment in Ypsilanti."

Sam married Lucille Davis, the mother of four children. He began teaching his new wife the art of undertaking, until she earned her own certificate. Two children were born to the couple: Joseph and Clement. After a stormy divorce, she ended up with the business.

Sam moved to Detroit where he started another undertaking business, but it was not the success he hoped for. He returned to Ypsilanti. He later provided interviewers with some key observation from his long years as a resident of the city. He talked of the Dennis family, who, according to Sam, "came from Bay City, where they had run a successful rooming house. Mr. Dennis worked for one of the railroads."

They built a large home on South Adams which remains to this day. Henry Newton operated a prosperous grocery store at the corner of Monroe and Huron Streets. Sam also had an apartment house at one time. Solomon Bow had two "tobacco houses" during the period of the early twentieth century, and also "had a large horse barn."

Carrying on the family tradition, Solomon also owned a bakery. One of Solomon's partners in the house moving business was Sam Richardson's father.

According to Sam, George Hayes, once the city's mayor, urged his father to enter the real estate business, making him the first African American realtor in the city. It was sometime later that Al Anderson became the second person of color to have that honor. He was followed by Herbert Francois. Isaac Newton had a barber shop during those years "on the alley behind Michigan Avenue," serving blacks only.

Other barbers of the time were Elwood Knox, Harry Starks, and Bill Roper. Sam once worked as a barber in a shop on Ellsworth Road, with Wylie Day, who had come from Canada about 1930. "A man named Fletcher had a barber shop on Harriet Street, across the street from the Mahaley Beer Garden." Amos Washington's grocery store and butcher shop was on the corner of Hamilton and Harriet Streets. His

AFRICAN AMERICAN PROPERTY OWNERS IN YPSILANTI - 1915*

Anderson, Alfred H. (Emma)	404 S. Washington
Anderson, Charles H. (Julia)	413 S. Adams
Anderson, Lucy J.. (wid John)	303 S. Adams
Ashe, William J. (May)	444 S. Washington
Bartlett, Elizabeth (wid George)	102 S. Hamilton
Bow, Egbert (Josephine)	415 S. Washington
Bow, Solomon (Frances)	420 S. Washington
Brooks, Robert J.	504 Jefferson
Brooks, William H.	402 Second Ave.
Brown, John A. (Florence)	319 Second Ave.
Cayne, Marshall	7 S. Normal
Clark, Mrs. Anna	211 S. Adams
Clark, James W. (Dolly)	8-10 Congress (residence & saloon)
Crosby, Elizabeth (Simeon)	518 Watling
Crosby, Rebecca	
Crosby, Simeon	
Davis, Albert	420 First Ave.
Derrick, Rev. James (May)	542 Jefferson
Dew, Edward and Austin	
Dickerson, Dr. John H.	309 Washington (residence 311)
Evans, Sarah F. (Barzel)	407 Monroe
Gough, Daniel R. (Mary)	311 S. Adams
Green, Arthur	422 S. Adams
Grennage, James	322 Chidester
Hamilton, Richard	315 S. S. Adams
Harper, Mrs. Eugene	534 First Avenue
Harris, Alice (Peter)	316 S. Adams
Harris, William F. (Eliza T.)	329 Chidester
Hayes, Carrie M.	1914 Cardine
Hayes, George W. (Emma)	14 E. Cross (grocery and residence)
Jacques, Barney (Eliza)	520 Harriet
Johnston, George A. (Celia)	607 Chicago
Jones, William Henry (Mary E.)	529 Madison
Jones, W. Randolph	434 Harriet
Kersey, Herman E.	
Kersey, James H. (Mary)	317 First Avenue
Lynch, Ira	975 Spring
Mahaley, Jeremiah (Carrie)	412 Monroe
McCoy, Anna R. (wid Harvey)	315 Harriet

Merriman, Elizabeth (wid Riley)	526 Hamilton
Merriman, Philip	
Miller, Thomas Henry (Jane)	413 Monroe
Mofferd, Elizabeth	321 S. Hamilton
Morris, Margaret (wid George)	327 Chidester
Morton, Ida (Richard J.)	417 Hamilton
Norris, Lizzie	321 S. Hamilton
Perry, John E. (Anna)	531 Second Avenue
Pollard, William H.	521 Watling
Preston, Simon (Harriet)	307 Harriet
Richardson, Joseph H. (Hattie)	416 S. Washington
Richardson, Richard (Nettie)	410 S. Washington
Robbins, R. H.	
Roberts R. H .	
Robinson, Jefferson	
Sherman, Wealthy (wid John C.)	406 S. Washington
Simmons, Florence	
Simpson, Charles O. (Martha)	925 Chicago
Smith, Frances C.	
Smith, Hattie	
Starks, Charles (Exiline)	302 S. Adams
Starks, Milford (Bessie)	308 S. Adams
Starks, Rose	427 Ballard
Taylor, Mrs. Rebecca	409 Harriet
Thompson, Elijah G. (Eliza E.)	325 Second Avenue
Thompson, George (Eliza)	528 Jefferson
Tolbert, Julia	515 Watling
Warren, Fred (Myrtle)	446 Washington
White, John H. ((Ida M.)	601 S. Huron
Woods, Abraham	320 Harriet
Wright, Robert	321 Chidester

*Original list culled from Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress (1915). Pp. 147-201.

brother was a partner in the business.

James Clark was " the richest Negro in town," and had a saloon down town. "George Johnston, a brother-in-law to Solomon Bow, had operated a successful farm up north, but owned a nice home where the present police station is located." (Johnston is listed in the 1915 publication, Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress, as possibly "the wealthiest Afro-American in Washtenaw County"). He remembered Anna McCoy, (the sister of Elijah McCoy), who lived where Fletcher's barber shop had been. John Perry was the "only Negro Democrat in town" and was city dog catcher. "Dr. Dickerson (John) bought a saloon from George Clark's widow, and also invested in the new hotel downtown".

Other "socalled oldtimers" provided information and leads to happenings during the twentieth century years. Each provided points of view which enriched information available from printed sources. These helped to provide the foundation on which this story could be built.

Chapter Ten

"Let Us Enjoy Each Other"

In the early days of Ypsilanti, darker skinned settlers learned to rely on the support of neighbors. In addition to visits in homes of friends, they learned to unite for causes common to their welfare. A strong desire to hold on to their religious orientation, maintained throughout the dark slavery period as an African tradition, resulted in their joining with existing churches for the first few years.

THE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A yearning for a more active and emotional association with God triggered formation of the African Methodist Episcopal Society of Ypsilanti in 1843. Growing out of informal meetings in the homes of Flora Thompson and Sylas Jones. Corporation papers were filed in Ann Arbor with the Washtenaw County Court. It is recorded that some white Methodists felt affronted by the action, but asssurnces came from the withdrawing members assuring whites that their departure only fulfilled a desire to have a sanctuary of their own.

SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH

The efforts of William Cazey, who came to the village as an escaped slave from Missouri, and soon emerged as one of the founders of Second Baptist Church in 1860, is also evidence of a longing to continue a religious tradition with in which most blacks were familiar.

Cazey, as one of the' eleven persons who formed the original membership of the Church in 1860, was soon elected chairman of the Board of Trustees. Possibly he was also a deacon, for he was known in the community as "Deacon Cazey."

The old Presbyterian Church on Pearson, between Adams and Hamilton streets was purchased for $1200. They met there for some time, with the Reverend H. P. Jacobs as pastor. Later meeting locations included

217 Babbitt, the Adams Street School, and a building on "the south side of Chicago Avenue between Normal and Ballard streets.

Deacon Cazey was anxious to see "his church" in a permanent home of its own. To that end, he was making payments on land on the corner of Hamilton and Catherine, when he was made to realize the eminence of his death. He requested his fellow trustees to continue the payments on this land. But the members, perhaps unconvinced of the value of that land to the church's future, failed to follow through. The property reverted eventually to the seller, and finally was placed in trust to First Baptist Church for Second Baptist Church, where it remained for the next 90 years.

The Baptist and Methodist churches existed for many years, almost within a stone's throw of each other, and the only congregations solely devoted to serving African Americans in Ypsilanti.

The Ypsilanti City Directory for 1916, shows a Church of God and Saints of Christ, with by the Reverend Robert L. Christian as pastor. The address was 309 Harriet, and services were held on Saturday, "from 11:30 a.m. until sundown, Friday evening 7:30 and Sunday evening 7:30. This church did not again appear in the directory until 1940 when the Reverend George C. Henry was listed as pastor. At that time the word "Independent" appeared in parenthesis. The directory for 1940 and 1941 also carried the listing "Church of God (Sanctified), 407 S. Adams, Rev. J. Howard Henson."

Efforts to establish a Zion A. M. E. Church are indicated in listings in the 1926, 1927 and 1928 directories. This congregation worshipped at "e s Adams, 1 s of Buffalo" [formerly Adams Street School], Sunday 11 A. M. and 8 P. M., Sunday School 3 P. M. The Pastor was the Rev. William T. Munday.

The Rev. John C. McIntyre is listed in the 1924 Ypsilanti City Directory as pastor of St.John's Baptist Church, 448 Monroe.

Requests for information on current churches in Ypsilanti were, for the most part, not answered.

The October 11, 1961 issue of the Ypsilanti Press carried at item about the Rev. S. L. Roberson and his church, Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church, being admitted to Michigan Baptist Convention, a part of the well known American Baptist Organization.

COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GOD

In 1925, Minnie Walker offered to assist in the establishment of a new group called The Church of God. Among those with whom she expressed this interest was Elder John Richards, who was in agreement. They began holding meetings in different homes, and additional worshippers were attracted.

A tent was erected on First Avenue, and Elder Charles White joined Richards to hold services. The following increased. Their new meeting place on Jefferson was dedicated on August 9, 1931.

The congregation grew steadily under Elders Richards, John Clark, John Evans, Charles White, Bessie Collins, Jesse Caldwell, Jack Ricks, David Marshall, and Roosevelt Williams. With the arrival of Fred Davis in 1958, the lay leaders saw him as one to groom for future leadership.

Actively involved in the Wisconsin Avenue Church of God in Detroit, Davis felt himself called to to Christian leadership. He was a high school dropout from Alabama, but decided that failing would not deter him. After earning his diploma, he enrolled in Detroit Bible College. In a dream he saw himself being called to the leadership of Ypsilanti's Community Church of God. In a few days the call did actually come.

The small, congregation purchased a parsonage for the new pastor. Some land was acquired on Jefferson Street, and in 1960, the first structure was dedicated. Elder Davis brought with him an intense interest and concern for people, and felt that the church should take a leadership role and get involved. He convinced the church to add a radio ministry. He also realized the need for more youth activities. As a result of this action, several young people heard the call to the ministry. The need for more space led to the purchase of additional land which was soon developed.

Elder Davis' dreams may be witnessed on evenings when rooms are filled with anxious children and adults receiving instruction. Children with reading and/or other deficiencies are aided by volunteers from local educational institutions.

Some adults are taking advantage of the opportunities to make up for education or training interrupted years before. The sounds of pianos, organs, and other instruments, played by unsure hands, are easily picked up by listening ears. Somewhere a human voice lifts itself to the rafters. All might be said to be reaching for the stars.

From a dream first held by Minnie Walker, picked up and nourished by many others, this congregation has its collective feet firmly planted.

The influence of the Church of God in Christ denomination on Ypsilanti is worthy of note. The man who had the greatest influence in this endeavor seems to have been the late Reverend Floyd A. Walls. Not only did he build a congregation, known as Shiloh Church of God in Christ, but because of his own administrative effectiveness, he rose to the Bishopric. The first church in Ypsilanti spawned several ministers in this area, and we are told that there are several in other areas of the country which grew from the influence of Bishop Walls. Again, the greatest tribute to the Bishop is his sons who are following in his footsteps.

Considering that throughout the first quarter of the 20th century there were only two black churches in the city, the number began to mushroom in the second quarter. The Ypsilanti Seventh Day Adventist Church built quite a following. Additional Baptist Churches made their appearance. Several of the new denomination, Church of God In Christ, appeared throughout the city and Township.Currently there are the following: Fountain (Ann Arbor), Greater Love, Mount Olive (Ypsilanti), New Bethel (Superior Township), Bethel, New Hope (Sumpter Township), St. James (Ypsilanti), Shiloh (Ypsilanti), True Vine (Ypsilanti Township) and West Willow (Ypsilanti Township). In addition, there is the Spiritual Israel Church & Its Army with at two locations in the area. From the establishment of The African Methodist Episcopal Society of Ypsilanti, established in 1843, the number of church options has grown with the popupopulation of African Americans.

SOCIAL LIFE

The end of the Civil War had removed a major concern from Ypsilanti's black population. Their attention now turned to gaining voting rights denied under the Michigan Constitution of 1837, and to the enjoyment of other rights of free men and women.

There were at least two Grant Clubs operating in the village, out of respect for the leader of the Union forces in the Civil War.

Along with attendance at special meetings to petition the Legislature, they yearned for a normalcy they had never known. The elevation of William I. Burdine to Grandmaster of the Michigan Masonic Order in 1870 gives credence to the existence of a local group at that time. Other lodges were also present.

The Ypsilanti Sentinel of April 18, 1874, announced the formation of a "Colored Brass Band, with T. Bow, President; C. H. Anderson, Vice-President; L. Thompson, Secretary; and E. Thomas, Assistant Secretary." Other members were: R. H. Motaw, R. H. Artist, W. R. Jones, W. H. Morris, W. T. Brown, and C. Hicks.

On October 30, 1875, The Ypsilanti Commercial carried the following item:

> The Colored Band a few evenings since gave Mayor Barnes a fine serenade. The band are [sic] $25.00 richer; isn't that the right kind of appreciation? The same evening they serenaded Mr. S. Post. They were invited in, and treated to a capital supper.

In The Ypsilanti Commercial of November 30, 1878:

> The Colored Band gave a social dance at their hall on Thanksgiving evening.

An item in the The Ypsilanti Commercial on September 1, 1877, told of an excursion by the A.M.E. Church to Saline "last Thursday, led by the pastor, Reverend Jason Bundy."

As institutional racism gained a more permanent foothold in the community, the local presses ceased printing non-sensational news about blacks. This period also saw the rise of the black press, and the use of local correspondents. Each week the Plaindealer of Detroit carried columns which told very briefly of occurrences in towns and cities across the state. Here we get a later view of association efforts as they appeared in the black newspapers:

> The Lightseekers met at the home of F. J. Johnson. The Ladies Lyceum met at the home of the David Yorks. July 19, 1891.
>
> The Lightseekers met last night at the residence of Miss Estella Embers. Topics discussed during the evening were music, steamboats, the three largest cities in the world and their capitals [sic]. The Ladies Lyceum met at Mrs. Amanda Moore's. Will give a high tea and crochet party Tuesday at Prof. Burdine's. June 12, 1891.
>
> The Ladies Lyceum met in the parlor of Mrs. D. York. The Lightseekers met at the residence of F. J.

> Johnson. The Willing Workers met at the home of Mrs. William Beckwith. July 10, 1891.
>
> The Ladies Lyceum met at the residence of Mrs. R. H. Morton, Tuesday evening. April 22, 1892. The Good Samaritans gave a Martha Washington Tea at their hall, Monday, which was largely attended. April 22, 1892.

The above examples show two trends. Firstly, as black folk were systematically shut out of the mainstream, they started the creation of their own methods of communication. Secondly, their natural desire to associate in various forms expressed itself very early, and continues to this day.

Church clubs appeared often. An example of which was "The Willing Workers [of the A. M. E. Church] met at the home of Mrs. Wm. Beckwith."

THE PALM LEAF CLUB

On October 30, 1904, the Palm Leaf Club was organized. The original name seems to have been the Trustee Helpers (of Brown Chapel AME Church). It was one of several groups organized to help erase the debt created by the new building at Adams and Buffalo. The Pastor, the Reverend Lewis Pettiford, encouraged the organization of such clubs, each of which was assigned to assume a specific portion of the debt.

This group was assigned the task of paying for the insurance on the nearly completed structure. One member of the club wrote later that the chandeliers were also paid for by the club about 1917. That would have been under the pastorate of the Rev. S. V. S. Harris. The Club likely had several such assignments during the years that it was a part of the A. M. E. Church.

The original members, all affiliated with the A. M. E. Church, were: Emma Anderson, (President), Alice Anderson, Nellie Green, Mary Jones, Mary Ann Kersey, Margaret McCoy, Amanda Moore, Elizabeth Martin, and Temperance Woods. A 1930s note, written by one of the founders, stated "There were 10 ladies who felt that we could work [as a church club] and have an independent club also, [so we] decided to put over our own project in our own way, and spend our money where we felt it was most needed.... At first we did not meet the approval of trustees and the different pastors, and we were criticized. But we were constantly meeting some small demand, and always gave the receipts to trustees, and every year we planned to make a big payment on the mortgage indebtedness when it came due, always giving the receipts to the trustees. As the years went by the church learned to depend on The Palm Leaf Club. But we remained an independent club. In the twentynine years since we organized, we have helped girls that have been fallen, went to the relief of the sick, wired the church, put a gas range in tbe church..."

Palm Leaf Club members and the church finally came to a complete parting of the ways. Though no one remembers exactly when it took place, it probably occurred in the mid-1930s. As an independent group the club was supportive of many community projects, some of which were: the starting of a home for girls, a movement led by Mrs. Amanda Wickliff and Mrs. Thelma Goodman, an effort which failed, but eventually led to the establishment of Carver Community Center on Harriet Street, with William Jones as Director. This was eventually taken over by the City and Jesse Rutherford became the director.

The club was active in the establishment of a nursery school on the South Side, led by Mrs. Louise Bass.

In recent years, The Palm Leaf Club was one of the leaders in the acquisition of the Women's Club House at 319 Washington Street. It was also active in supporting the paving of streets on Ypsilanti's South Side.

There had been an organization of local clubs called "The Triple Entente." With the organization of the local chapter of the Michigan Association of Colored Women's Clubs, the proceeds and properties of "The Triple Entente" were placed at the disposal of the new organization. Dr. Rosa Gragg, President of he NACWC, and a Detroit resident, served as an adviser to the organization on that project.

A major activity has been an Annual Palm Leaf Tea, begun in the 1940s at the suggestion of of Mrs. Gertrude Francois Warren, to raise funds for the support of a scholarship program. Many of the more than 60 recipients return annually to support the effort.

At various times there have been Pony Tail Palms, Young Adult Palms, Senior Palms, and Junior Palms. In May, 1942, the Junior Palms joined with the Palm Leafs to host the State Association Convention. The Junior Palms President was Lenora Davis and the Vice-President was Winnie Perry. In 1961, Paulette Dozier became President of The Pony Tail Palms.

Other clubs of note over the years have been The Kentucky Wonders, the Modernistic Club, and The Pioneer Dramatic Club. The latter group used the new Harriet Street School in 1938 to perform "the well known Biblical tragedy of Judea," as reported by Mrs. Eugenia O'Bannon in the Detroit Tribune, on September 24, 1938.

The Silhouettes, composed of wives of members of the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, has been active for a number of years. So has the Voguettes, a social organization. The names of additional clubs were supplied by Mrs. Mayme Marshall, who has been active with the Ypsilanti Association of Women's Clubs, and is a long time supporter of the Club House.

Two clubs which are active at this time are The Sewing Circle, and the Social Ten. The Jolly Men's Club has also been around for a few years. The Emanon Club, a group of men devoted to the recognition and encouragement of scholarship in high school students, has been in operation for many years. Even those clubs with primary concern for social activities sometime do take on projects which benefit others.

A person who deserves much of the credit for the affiliation of Ypsilanti women's clubs with the National Association of Negro Women's Clubs is Mrs. Louise Bass, the wife of Dr. Thomas J. Bass. She was an active member of the State Association, in which she served as President, and held several positions with the national organization. Locally she held memberships in both the Voguettes and the Palm Leaf Club.

An interesting but unusual phenomenon among Ypsilanti clubs is the Patsy Chandler Birthday Club. Mrs. Chandler, a religiously motivated and civic minded individual, came up with the idea of celebrating her birthday by having a party. She would ask guests to contribute to a worthy project of her choosing within the community. The idea caught on, and for many years the proceeds of these "parties" have benefitted several projects. Most notable of these were the water fountain beside the Public Library, and the bust of Charles Eugene Beatty, Sr., placed in the foyer of the new Perry Child Development Center. Both projects received help from public coffers, but considering the purpose, few complaints were heard.

There is no doubt that church and community activities have benefitted African

Americans as a group. Togetherness for the common good has provided solace for both individuals and groups. By associating for the common good, they have received strong encouragement to continue family orientation and to pursue productive lives.

THE N. A. A. C. P.

Awareness of the existence of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was evidently not sufficient for the establishment of a chapter in this City. The organization was established in 1909, when some interested persons answered a call for action from Mary White Ovington, the first professional social worker to work and live in New York City's black ghetto. A race riot in Springfield, IL in 1908, caused William English Walling to write an article in The Independent, asking for support for African Americans. The Great Lakes District Conference was held in Chicago in 1916, but it is not known if there was representation from Ypsilanti.

About 1918, however, in response to an attempt by the Ypsilanti School Board to extend segregated schools by enlarging the old Adams Street School, a chapter was organized in the City. The following year, the services of Attorney Charles H. M'Honey of Detroit were engaged to fight the case. Information from the national office of the NAACP attest to the complaints filed with the organization about conditions in this city. The author of the letters was none other than William Paul Clay, a perennial leader of black protest throughout the period.

After winning the case, the Adams Street School closed in 1920. The chapter was evidently allowed to die. A later group sought chapter affiliation about 1938. Not much is known about the program of that group. It seems to have died down during the World War II years, but was revived after the war ended. This group seems to have been led by Herbert Francois, and and a few others, such as Paul Wasson, Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Louise Bass,, Dr. Lawrence Perry, Mrs. Marguerite Eaglin, Dr. Philip Wells, and the Reverend Bennie Smith, each of whom played significant roles.

The organization seems to have grown significantly over the next few years. For awhile, Mrs. Eaglin was president and led the organization through the Martin Luther King, Jr. years, when there was a general awakening throughout the country. In recent years, under the leadership of Attorney Raymond Mullins, the Willow Run Chapter merged with the Ypsilanti Chapter to form a a rather active group. Two past presidents of the chapter provide guidance and assistance for Mullins as he strives to forge ahead in the fight against bigotry and prejudice. They are Dr. Thomas J. Bass and Mrs. Mary L. Foley. Membership in the chapter is larger than at any other time in history. Several concerned whites are among the very active members. An emphasis on youth programs has heightened interest and broadened the influence of the organization in the area. One of the leaders in this aspect of the program is a recent retiree from the Assistant Superintendency of the Willow Run Schools, Dr. Ruth Moorman.

LEE OSLER, COMPOSER

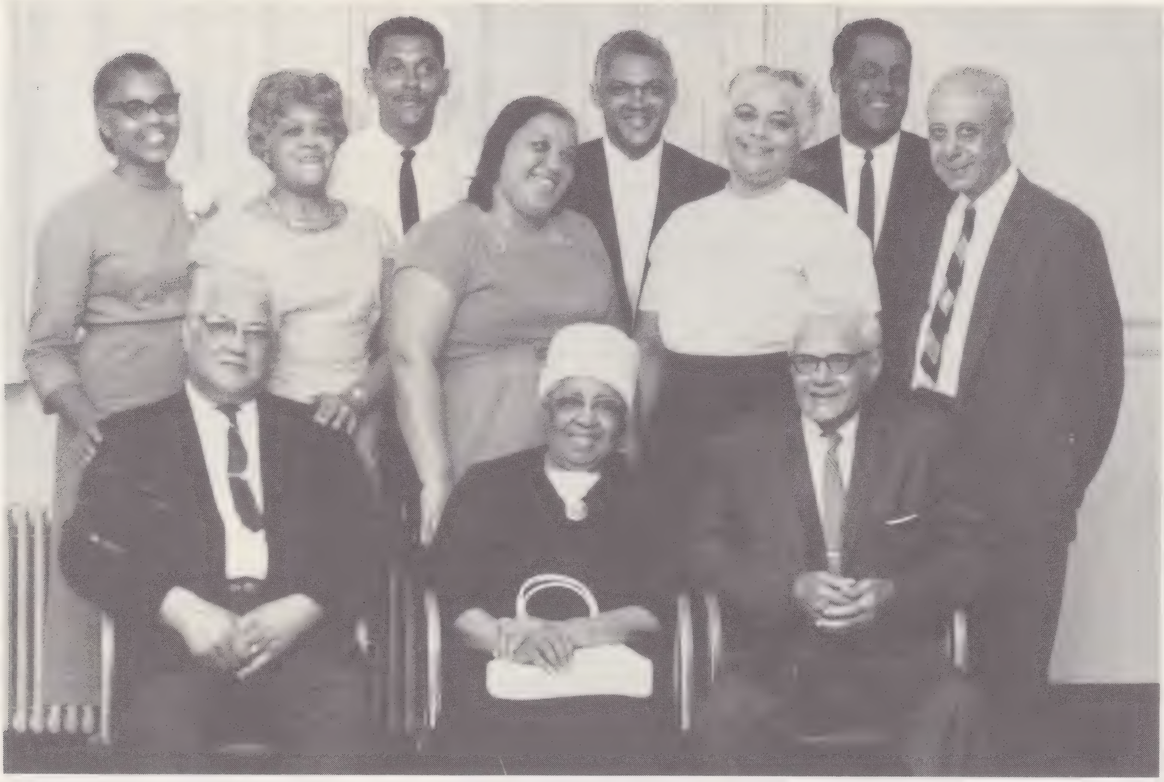
A native of Champaign, Illinois must be recognized in any account of African Americans in Ypsilanti. Lee Osler is the composer of "Back to Ypsilanti," a catchy tune adopted by the Ypsilanti City Council in 1982 as the City's official song. With a natural ability to create tunes, Osler has written several jingles for local business and activity groups. Many of his songs are directed at young people, carrying real and sincere messages.A lover of children,he he seems to have a natural ability to relate to their interests. Dr. James Hawkins, the Superintendent of Schools, said of him "You develop the occasion and he can develop the song." Osler also wrote songs adopted by the cities of Detroit and Ann Arbor. Though his fame has yet to extend beyond the boundaries of Michigan, those who know his works feel that it is just a matter of time before he will get his chance to make it big, perhaps in the New York or Hollywood environment. His recordings appear under the Mustache Records label.

REAR ADMIRAL LOUIS A. WILLIAMS is thought to have achieved the highest military rank of any Ypsilantian in history. He now lives in retirement in San Diego, CA.

James Hawkins
School Superintendent
1984-90

MARGUERITE EATLIN, Civil Rights Activist, NAACP leader, teacher and counselor, during the period following 1950.

SIX CHILDREN, all living in the same neighborhood, and who benefitted from the Civil Rights era, are (l. to r.): Raymond Mullins, Caroline Stewart, Norman Taylor, Charlotte Beatty, Valsine Francois, and Mary Louise Beatty.



MOSES BASS, SR., Family. l. to r., 1st row: Moses Bass, Jr., Laura Elder Bass, Moses Bass, Sr.. 2d row: Eva Bass Siscoe, Dorothy Bass Holbrook, Mildred Roberson, Mildred Bass Rancher, Russell Bass. 3d row: John Bass, Samuel Bass, Melvin Bass.

EDWARD BRCWN, once a student at Perry School, went on to become a Podiatrist in the City of Chicago.

L. J. McKeown has served as Chief of the Police Department since July 1990.

Chapter Eleven

"Half Century Celebration: 1915"

The best available listing of the African American population fifty years after Emancipation is Polk's Ypsilanti City Directory of 1916. Because the practice was still followed in Polk's directories of using the (c) for citizens of African heritage, the volume provides a good source for this purpose. The practice of including spousal names in parenthesis is some help to increasing the reference value. Methods used by canvassers was not then, nor are they now, as accurate as the U. S. Census.

AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION, YPSILANTI

Ypsilanti City Directory, 1916

Anderson, Alfred H. (Emma), trav. slsmn., res. 454 Washington S
Anderson, James J. (Sarah), lab. res r 21 Center
Anderson, Lucy J. (wid John), res 303 Adams
Anderson, Mabel, student, bds near 21 Center
Anderson, Vena, bds 401 Monroe av
Armstrong, Peter, lab. res 319 Harriet
Armstrong, Samuel, (Matilda), res 411 2d
Bartlett, Elizabeth, (wid George), res 102 Hamilton S
Baylis, Elnora Mrs., bds 515 Watling

Baylis, Ernest A., (Mary) barber, rear 16 Huron S, res 538 Jefferson av
Beeler, Robert P. (Mary A.) lab, res 442 Chidister
Benson, Clara, bds. 420 Washington S
Black, Francis, bds 524 1st
Bow, Egbert, (Josephine), lab res 415 Hamilton S
Bow, Solomon, housemover, 420 Washington S, res same
Bowles, Etta, res 401 Monroe
Brooks, Clarence, bds 503 Jefferson
Brooks, James, lab bds 503 Jefferson
Brooks, Robert, bds 503 Jefferson
Brooks, Viola, bds 314 Chidister
Brooks, Wm. H. (Anna), lab., res 503 Jefferson
Brown, Henry, lab., bds 331 1st
Brown, John A. (Florence), farm hd, res 319 2d
Brown, Mary, bds 418 Adams S
Brown, Stella, cook, res 536 2d
Browning, David (Floydie), lab res 438 Washington S
Casey, Asa (Marie), lab. res. 309 Hamilton S
Cayne, Isaiah (Sina) mason, res 7 Normal S
Cayne, Ruth A. (student) bds 7 Normal S
Chandler, John (Mattie) lab. res 540 Jefferson
Christian, Robert L. Rev. (Mary) pastor Church of God and Saints of Christ, res

309 Harriet Church of God and Saints of Christ, 309 Harriet

Clark, Annie V. (wid Peter) res 438 Chidister

Clark, James W. (Dolly) saloon 8-10 Michigan av res 211 Adams S

Coleman, Edward (Sarah) res 10 Huron S

Collins, Benjamin H. (Lillian) driver Meade & Connors, res 438 Chidister

Collins, John A. (Ophelia) res 412 Washington S

Conway, William, lab. bds 117 Adams S

Crosby, Edna, bds 518 Watling blvd.

Crosby, Elizabeth Mrs., res. 518 Watling blvd.

Crosby, James D., lab bds 518 Hamilton S

Crosby, Lafayette, (Sarah M) res 327 1st

Crosby, Rebecca J. (wid Theophbilus L.) res 518 Hamilton S

Crosby, Simeon, lab. res 604 Watling blvd

Curry, Albert, lab. bds 1021 Ellis

Curry, Edward, lab. bds 1021 Ellis

Curry, Emma Mrs., hairdresser 1021 Ellis, res same

Curry, James, (Emma) janitor, res 1021 Ellis

Curry, Mabel, caterer, 1021 Ellis, bds same

Davis, Albert D., (Anna) lab. res 448 Washington S

Davis, Albert S. lab. bds 448 Washington S

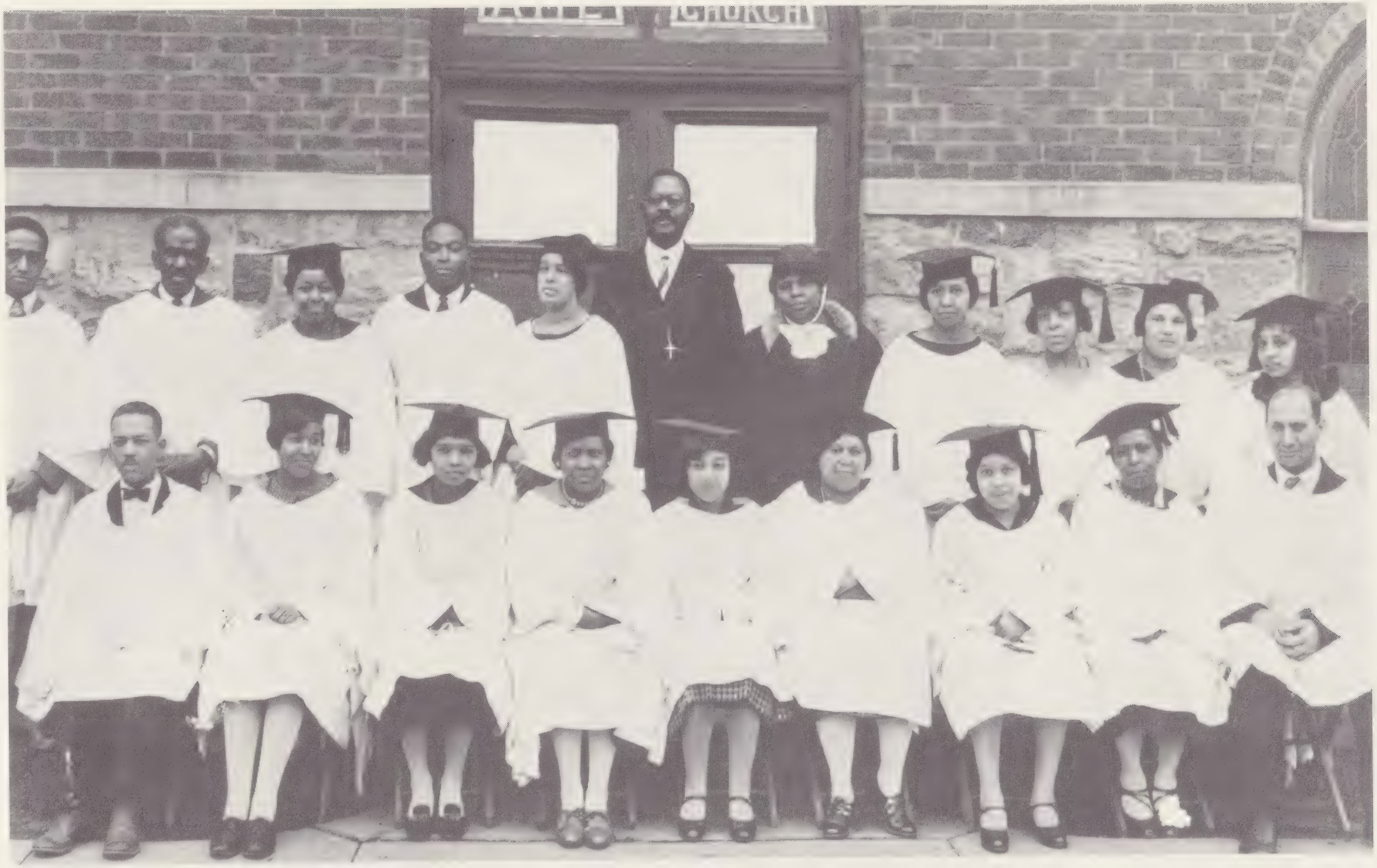
Davis, Albertina, student, bds 426 1st

Davis, Alfred A. (Lucinda) gardener, res 420 1st

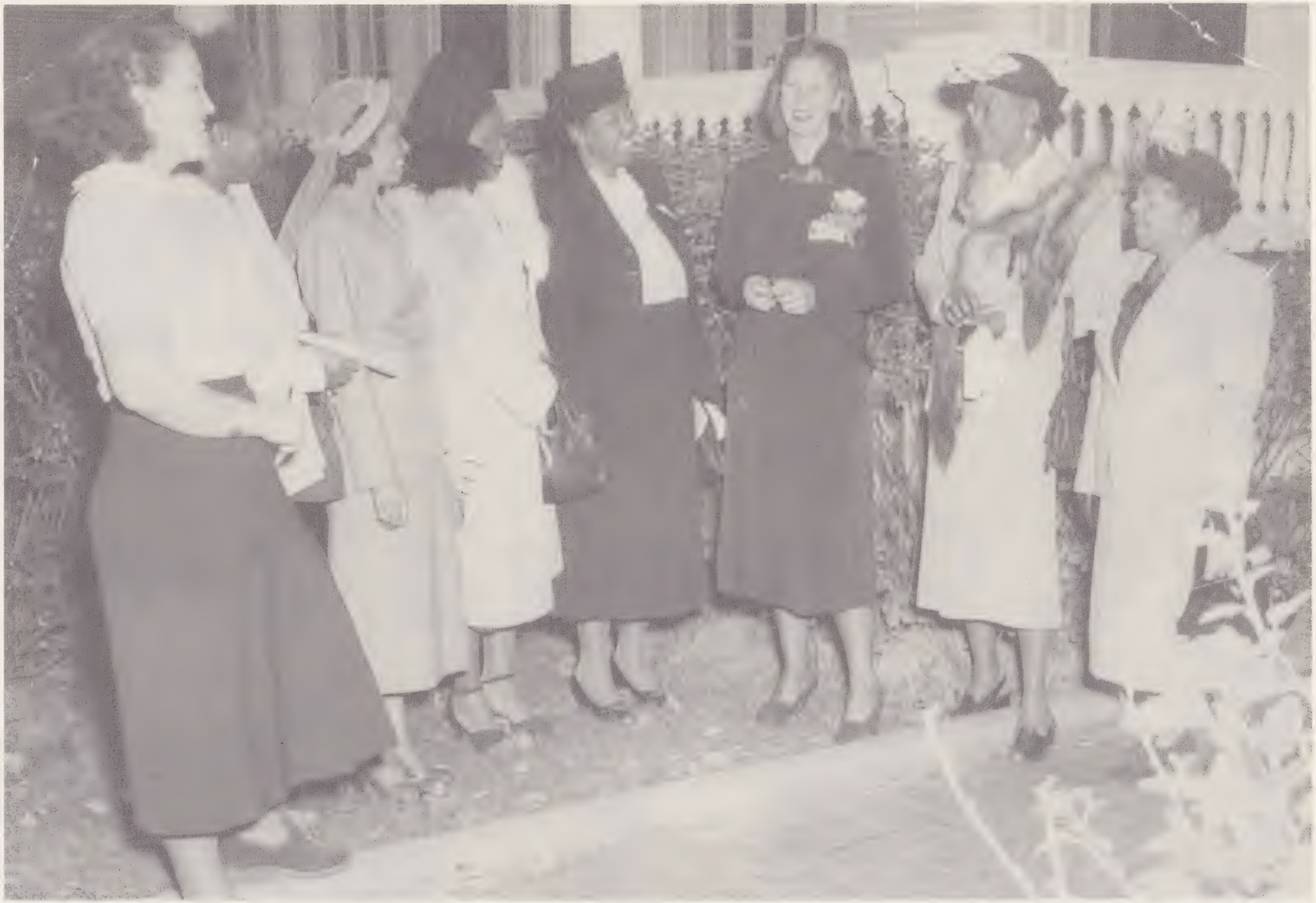
Davis, Gladys, bds. 448 Washington S

Davis, Lee O. (Fannie E.) lab res (328)

341 2d
Davis, Ozias, (Sarah) gardener) resd 510 1st
Davis, Roy, lab. bds 448 Washington S
Davis, Zachariah H. (Debby A.) lab. res 426 1st
Derrick, James O, Rev. (Mary) pastor Second Baptist Church, res 542 Jefferson av
Dickerson, John H. (Alice) phys 309 Washington S res 311 same
Duckett, Isaac (Lillian), farmer, res 139 Hawkins
Due, Austin, lab. bds 426 Washington S
Due, Edward G. tmstr Clarke Bros. bds 426 Washington S
Dunmore, Caroline (wid Thomas) res 607 Jefferson
Dunmore, Selda E. (Ida), lab res 305 Monroe av
Durham, Benjamin (Cora) lab. res 505 Huron S
Durham, Cora Mrs., attndt Ypsilanti Mineral Water Bath Co. res 505 Huron S
Durham, John, farm hd., res 315 2d
Evans, Barzel (Sarah), res 407 Monroe av
Evans, William R., lab. res 452 Washington S
Freeman, Caleb lab. res. 418 Adams S
Freeman, George (Amanda), lab res 416 Adams S
Freeman, Lee (Emma) res 418 Washington S
Freeman, Margaret, bds 418 Adams S
Freeman, Viola, bds. 418 Adams S
Gaines, Emma Mrs. bds 454 1st
Garel, James L. (Olive), lab res 443



THE BROWN CHAPEL CHANCEL CHOIR during the pastorate of the Rev. M. R. Rhononee (1928-1934). Seated, l. to r.: Charles Brown, Josephine Campbell Lawson, Olive Evans, Lydia Neill, Dorothy Taylor, Lottie Wright, Ethel Neely, Minnie Neely, Archie Rickman. Standing: Theron Kersey, George Warren, Florence Harris, Howard Neely, Maudine Watkins, Pastor and Mrs. Rhononee, Martha Neely, Genevieve Williams, Hazel Reed, and Bernice Kersey Hoffman.



Civil Rights Activists, 1950s. The group drove to Lansing and were the guests of the governor's wife. They are: Willie Burton, Lucille Neely, Florence Harris, Nancy Quirk Williams, Louise Mahaley, and Margaret Russell.

Chidister
Goodman, Bert, tmstr, bds 524 1st
Goodman, George, bds 524 1st
Goodman, Hazel, bds 524 1st
Goodman, Leonard, farm hd, bds 524 1st
Goodman, Lewis C., (Amelia) tmstr, res 524 1st
Green, Arthur (Nellie), molder W. L. McCullough Co. rles 422 Adams S
Green, Bessie, bds 422 Adams S
Green, Chauncey, lab, bds 422 Adams S
Green, George W. (Amelia) lab, res 408 Washington S
Green, Jessie, bds. 422 Adams S
Green, Olive, bds 422 Adams S
Green, Wavie, bds 422 Adams S
Griffin, Louis J. (Mary H.) barber, E A Baylis, res 446 Washington S
Griffin, Maargaret (wid George) res 436 1st
Hamilton, Richard (Anna), lab res 315 Adams S
Hardy, Isaac (Hattie), farm hd., res 520 1st
Harper, Emma (wid Benjamin) res 534 1st
Harris, David (Anna), lab res 320 Adams S
Harris, Gertrude, bds 329 Chidister
Harris, Peter (Alice), lab res 316 Adams S
Harris, Sarah Mrs. bds 320 Adans S
Harris, Wm. H. Jr. helper Shaefer Hardware Co. bds 329 Chidister
Harrison, Wm., carp bds 315 2d
Hayes, Almeda, bds 221 Harriet

Hayes, George W. (Georgianna), lab res 221 Harriet
Hayes, Noah E., horse dealer 221 Harriet, bds same
Hill, Caroline (wid Peter), res 315 2nd
Hill, Caroline (wid Matthew; aged 108) died Nov 19, 1913
Hopkins, George (Clara), lab. res 20 Huron S
Hurst, Samuel (Elizabeth) lab res 408 Monroe blvd
Hutchinson, James, watchman, res 616 Norris
Hutchinson, Wm, tmstr, res 214 Lincoln
Jackson, Belle, maid, Hawkins House
Jackson, Wm O, lab, res 444 1st
Jaks, Barney, (Eliza), lab, res 520 Harriet
Johns, Martha, (wid Lewis), res 433 Hamilton
Johnson, Cora, bds 315 2d
Johnson, Cynthia (wid John) bds 315 2d
Johnson, Leonard, lab. bds 443 Chidister
Johnston, George A. (Celia M.) farmer, res 607 Michigan av
Jones, Luther (Jessie), lab. res 514 Hamilton S
Jones, Wm H. (Mary), mason, res 529 Madison blvd
Jones, W Randolph, porter, res 434 Harriet
Kersey, Arden G. carp, bds 317 1st
Kersey, Augusta, bds 522 Hamialton S
Kersey, Bernice V, tchr Adams School, bds 317 1st Kersey, Charles, lab., bds 501 2d
Kersey, Herman E. (Jessie), carp. res 311

1st
Kersey, James H. (Mary A.) carp. res 317 1st
Kersey, Jennie Mrs. res. 522 Hamilton S
Kersey, Jerome M. electn bds 501 2d
Kersey, Leonard D. student, bds 317 1st
Kersey, Nina G. student bds 317 1st
Kersey, Sarah E Mrs. res 501 2d
Kersey, Theron W, pressfeeder, bds 522 Hamilton S
Lee, Henry (Maggie), lab, res 516 Jefferson av
Lee, Mary (wid John), res 538 1st
Locke, Benjamin H. prin Adams School, rms 309 Harriet
Long, Thelma, student, bds 438 2d
Long, Wm H (Harriet), res 450 1st
Lucas, Austin, (Ida), mason, res 303 Adams S
Lynch, Ira (Mary), lab res, 97 Spring
Lyons, Wm student, bds 419 Monroe
McCoy, Anna R (wid Harvey) res 315 Harriet
McCoy, George A, cook, bds 315 Harriet
McCurdy, Alvin, lab, res 30 Center
Maheley, Jeremiah (Carrie), mason, res 412 Monroe av
Maheley, Louise, student, bds 412 Monroe av
Maheley, Roy, mason, bds 412 Monroe av
Martin, Henry (Elizabeth) lab res 115 Adams S
Mashat, John (Florence), lab res 305 Adams S
Mayo, Preston (Anna), lab, res 409 Adams S
Merriman, Elizabeth (wid Riley), bds 526 Hamilton S

Merriman, Henry P. (Lucretia), lab, res 526 Hamilton S
Miles, James, pdlr, res 437 Chidister
Miller, Thomas (Mary), res 303 Harriet
Miner, Malvin, rms 20 Harriet
Mitchell, Carl P. (Nora L.), tmstr, res 313 Catherine
Mitchell, Ola V. student, bds 307 Harriet
Moore, Charles (Amanda), lab, res 512 2d
Morris, Adeline, dom 7 Normal
Morris, Margaret (wid George) res 327 Chidister
Morris, Margaret J. student, bds 214 Adams S
Morton, John M. carp, bds 314 Chidister
Morton, Richard J. (Ida J.) lab, res 417 Hamilton S Morton, Wm A (Joanna), helper Shaefer Hardware Co., res 314 Chidister
Mulder, James (Mary), lab, res 16 Huron
Newton, Eli (Sarah E), lab, res 516 2d
Newton, George P L (Ida J), lab res 528 2d
Newton, Sylvester E, student, bds 516 2d
Palmer, James (Jennie), lab, res ss Monroe av 1 w of Hawkins
Perry, George, driver, res 512 1st
Perry, George, lab, res 454 1st
Perry, John H. (Anna), lab res 5321 2d
Pickett, Mary, bds 434 Harriet
Pierce, Renza, houseman 511 Michigan av
Pollard, Clarence, lab 521 Watling blvd
Pollard, Earl G. (Jessie), porter, res 412 Adams S
Pollard, Wm, lab, res 521 Watling blvd
Poole, John, farm hd, bds 513 2d Poole, Mervin (Mamie), lab, res 513 2d
Preston, Clarence, student, bds 307

Harriet
Preston, George A. porter, bds 307 Harriet
Preston, Simon (Harriet M) coachman, res 307 Harriet
Rene, George, lab, bds 436 1st
Richardson, Joseph (Hattie), mason, res 416 Washington S
Richardson, Rebecca (wid Edward) bds 430 Washington S
Richardson, Richard (Nettie) grocer 430 Washington S, res same
Rickman, Edmund, lab, bds 302 Adams S
Rickman, Milford, lab, res 310 Adams S
Robbins, Edward A (Bertha), lab, res 310 Harriet
Robbins, Josephine (wid Sherman), res 229 Prospect
Robbins, Josiah C (Mary J), carp, res 438 Washington S
Robbins, Luttia M. student, bds 229 Prospect
Robbins, Sherman H. student, bds 229 Prospect
Robbins, Walter (Aretta), lab, res 426 Adams S
Roberts, Reddick (Carrie), lab, res 430 Adams S
Robinson, Albert (Hattie), res 426 Washington S
Robinson, Calvin (Nancy), lab, res 10 Huron S
Robinson, Mary (wid George), bds 322 Chidister
Robison, Wm. J. (Sylvia) lab, res 518 Harriet
Roderick, Minnie, bds 302 Adams S

Rodrick, Archie (Florence), lab, 313 Catherine
Rodrick, Cornelia (wid David), res 218 Buffalo
Rodrick, Edna B. bds 218 Buffalo
Rodrick, Leo D, student, bds 218 Buffalo
Rowe, Lizzie A Mrs. housekpr 214 Lincoln
Scott, Charles H. (Ada F), fireman, rew 329 2d
Second Baptist Church, se cor Hamilton S and Catherine
Seevers, John S. (Isabel) plasterer, res 436 Washington S
Shaw, Nancy (wid Robert F) bds 65 Water
Sherman, Wealthy (wid John C), res 406 Washington S
Sherman, Wm S, lab, U S Pressed Steel Co., bds 406 Washington S
Simpson, Albert P.(Jennie G), lab, res 437 2d
Simpson, Charles O (Martha), janitor res 925 Michigan av
Simpson, Elizabeth M (wid Levi) res 520 2d
Simpson, Ida, bds 444 1st
Smith, Frank C (Margaret), candymkr G M Caudy, res 434 Washington S
Smith, George (Cora), lab, res 524 Jefferson av
Smith, Levi M (Mary) lab, res 521 Jefferson av
Snow, Edward G (Margaret), lab 318 Chidister
Starks, Annie, bds 302 Adams S
Starks, Charles (Exilene), janitor, res 302 Adams S
Starks, Charles Jr., lab, bds 302 Adams S
Starks, Harry, lab, bds 302 Adams S
Starks, Martha E. student, bds 118 Forest av E
Starks, Milford, (Bessie), fireman, res 308 Adams S
Starks, Norman (Rose), elect eng, res 209

Buffalo
Starks, Rosa, dom, 427 Ballard
Starks, Rufus (Grace), res 434 Harriet
Starks, Vincent N (Sarah E) janitor Cleary College, res 118 Forest av E
Starks, Viola, student, bds 118 Forest av E
Stewart, Maria Mrs. bds 311 Adams S
Sydes, Ruth, tchr Adams School, rms 320 Harriet
Tanner, Byron (Sadie), foreman Westfall & Fall River Lumber Co., res 129 Factory
Taylor, Charles, lab, res 32 Bell S
Thomas, George (Adeline) driver E C Bartlett, res 435 Hawkins
Thomas, Thelma M., bds 139 Hawkins
Thompson, Arthur, lab, res 423 Adams S
Thompson, Elijah G (Eliza E) res 325 2d
Thompson, George (Eliza) lab, res 528 Jefferson av
Thompson, Mary, bds 528 Jefferson av
Thompson, Mary, dom, 511 Michigan av
Thompson, Peter (Mary) lab, res 311 Hamilton S
Thornton, George, lab, bds 115 Adams S
Thornton, Suzanne (wid Henry), bds 115 Adams S
Tolbert, Harry, lab bds 515 Watling blvd
Tolbert, Julia Mrs. res 515 Watling blvd
Upthegrove, Joseph (Emma) res 418 1st
Upthegrove, Rupert, lab, bds 418 1st
Ward, Archie E (Rebecca L) cupola tendr, Ypsilanti Hay Press Co, res 722 Norris
Ward, Edith M, bds 722 Norris
Ward, Genevieve, bds 722 Norris
Ward, Thomas A, lab, bds 722 Norris
Ware, Robert L (Carlotta) lab, res 441 Chidister
Warner, Mary, maid, 302 Hamilton Warren, Frederick (Myrtle) lab, res 446 Washington S

Warren, George (Minnie) lab, res 308 Monroe av
Welcome, Myrtle, res 430 1st
Wells, Martha M (wid Philip, res 323 2d
White, Esther, bds 681 Huron S
White, John H (Ida M), lab, res 601 Huron S
White, Pauline, bds 601 Huron S
White, Stanley, lab, bds 601 Huron S
White, Walter, bronzer, bds 433 Hamilton S
White, Wm, lab, res 433 Hamilton S
Williams, Frank (Laura), driver Meade & Connors, res 419 Monroe av
Williams, Isaac F Rev. (Katherine E), pastor, African M E Church, res 213 Buffalo
Williams, Nora, bds 443 Chidister
Williams, Patrick H (Sarah), lab, res 306 Monroe av
Williams, Susan Mrs. res 321 Hamilton S
Wilson, Ernest, lab, res ss Jefferson av 1 w of 2d
Wise, Loleata, tchr, Adams School, rms 329 Chidister
Woods, Abram (Temperance) driver Meade & Connors res 320 Harriet
Woods, Avery, driver Meade & Connors, bds 320 Harriet
Wright, Robert (Mary), lab, res 321 Chidister
Wright, Waleatta M., bds 616 Norris

The 1916 Polk's Ypsilanti City Directory lists the principal of Adams School as Benj. H. Locke, and shows him teaching 5th and 6th grades. Ruth Sydes teaches 3d and 4th grades, while Loleata Wise teaches 2d grade, and Bernice Kersey teaches 1st grade. All of the teachers at that time were African American. Good Samaritan Hall is listed on the north

AFRICAN AMERICAN PROPERTY OWNERS
IN YPSILANTI - 1915*

Anderson, Alfred H. (Emma)	404 S. Washington
Anderson, Charles H. (Julia)	413 S. Adams
Anderson, Lucy J.. (wid John)	303 S. Adams
Ashe, William J. (May)	444 S. Washington
Bartlett, Elizabeth (wid George)	102 S. Hamilton
Bow, Egbert (Josephine)	415 S. Washington
Bow, Solomon (Frances)	420 S. Washington
Brooks, Robert J.	504 Jefferson
Brooks, William H.	402 Second Ave.
Brown, John A. (Florence)	319 Second Ave.
Cayne, Marshall	7 S. Normal
Clark, Mrs. Anna	211 S. Adams
Clark, James W. (Dolly)	8-10 Congress (residence & saloon)
Crosby, Elizabeth (Simeon)	518 Watling
Crosby, Rebecca	
Crosby, Simeon	
Davis, Albert	420 First Ave.
Derrick, Rev. James (May)	542 Jefferson
Dew, Edward and Austin	
Dickerson, Dr. John H.	309 Washington (residence 311)
Evans, Sarah F. (Barzel)	407 Monroe
Gough, Daniel R. (Mary)	311 S. Adams
Green, Arthur	422 S. Adams
Grennage, James	322 Chidester
Hamilton, Richard	315 S. S. Adams
Harper, Mrs. Eugene	534 First Avenue
Harris, Alice (Peter)	316 S. Adams
Harris, William F. (Eliza T.)	329 Chidester
Hayes, Carrie M.	1914 Cardine
Hayes, George W. (Emma)	14 E. Cross (grocery and residence)
Jacques, Barney ((Eliza)	520 Harriet
Johnston, George A. (Celia)	607 Chicago
Jones, William Henry (Mary E.)	529 Madison
Jones, W. Randolph	434 Harriet
Kersey, Herman E.	
Kersey, James H. (Mary)	317 First Avenue
Lynch, Ira	975 Spring
Mahaley, Jeremiah (Carrie)	412 Monroe
McCoy, Anna R. (wid Harvey)	315 Harriet

Merriman, Elizabeth (wid Riley)	526 Hamilton
Merriman, Philip	
Miller, Thomas Henry (Jane)	413 Monroe
Mofferd, Elizabeth	321 S. Hamilton
Morris, Margaret (wid George)	327 Chidester
Morton, Ida (Richard J.)	417 Hamilton
Norris, Lizzie	321 S. Hamilton
Perry, John E. (Anna)	531 Second Avenue
Pollard, William H.	521 Watling
Preston, Simon (Harriet)	307 Harriet
Richardson, Joseph H. (Hattie)	416 S. Washington
Richardson, Richard (Nettie)	410 S. Washington
Robbins, R. H.	
Roberts R. H .	
Robinson, Jefferson	
Sherman, Wealthy (wid John C.)	406 S. Washington
Simmons, Florence	
Simpson, Charles O. (Martha)	925 Chicago
Smith, Frances C.	
Smith, Hattie	
Starks, Charles (Exiline)	302 S. Adams
Starks, Milford (Bessie)	308 S. Adams
Starks, Rose	427 Ballard
Taylor, Mrs. Rebecca	409 Harriet
Thompson, Elijah G. (Eliza E.)	325 Second Avenue
Thompson, George (Eliza)	528 Jefferson
Tolbert, Julia	515 Watling
Warren, Fred (Myrtle)	446 Washington
White, John H. ((Ida M.)	601 S. Huron
Woods, Abraham	320 Harriet
Wright, Robert	321 Chidester

*Original list culled from Michigan Manual of Freedmen's Progress (1915). Pp. 147-201.

side of Buffalo between Washington S and Adams S. This building is often cited as the location of public meetings involving blacks. The three black churches listed in the directory for 1916 are: Second Baptist, James O. Derrick, pastor; African Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Isaac F. Williams, pastor; Church of God and Saints of Christ, Rev. Robert L. Christian, pastor.

Changes in attitudes, as well as in ways of doing things, largely resulting from the industrial revolution, proved somewhat of a handicap to masses of African Americans, who for so long had been dependent upon whites for their very livelihoods, and who were so ill prepared for the kind of opportunities offered. The push for education might have hurried the process of preparation, but opposition from some objectors, and failure by wellwishers to appreciate the enormity of the task, minimized the progress.

Michigan and Ypsilanti joined with the nation in 1915 in celebrating 50 years of progress after emancipation. Governor Woodbridge Ferris appointed the Freedmen's Progress Commission, made up of several prominent Negroes from throughout the state. Oscar W. Baker, of Bay County, was elected chairman, with Francis H. Warren, of Detroit, as secretary. Ypsilanti was represented on the commission by Miss Carrie M. Hayes, and Dr. John Dickerson. The major responsibility of the commission was the organization of an exhibit to be placed in the Chicago Colliseum by August

22, 1915, the opening day of the national exposition. The second responsibility was the publication of collected information about the progress of Michigan's "colored" population since the Proclamation.

An excellent exhibition from this state included inventions "ranging from shoe polish to wireless telegraphy, from cherry pickers to thousand dollar clocks."

Ypsilantians represented were Anna Clark (fancy hand-made lace); Carrie M. Hayes (crochet doilie); Henry Jones (fancy work); Elizabeth Woffard (hand-made slippers); Wealthy Sherman (rug); Frank Smith (candy making equipment); and Fred Warren (hand-made cane).

The hurried collection of artifacts and documentation about black progress in Michigan was compiled under the title, Manual of Freedmen's Progress, a poorly organized volume, but nevertheless a provider of much information for later generations. A reprint of this volume is now available, thanks to John H. Green, of Detroit.

Later generations of the Bow family, known earlier for its operation of a grocery store, became involved in the house moving business, lasting into the 1930s. Watkin's Restaurant was a popular place on Michigan Avenue, just west of the river. Sam Travis' Barber Shop was down town. Pete Brooks owned a service station in the 1920s and 1930s at Huron and Harriet streets.

Thelma and George Goodman built a women's wear business in the basement of their home, later moving to Harriet Street and lasting until segregationist practices began to wane. Moses Bass and Sons built a store for them on Harriet. This was perhaps the best example of ingenuity in the face of discrimination which had gotten so much worse after 1900. Some current African Americans claim that this kind of experience did not touch them. Newcomers, however, were not necessarily welcomed at that time, and were possibly the ones at which the treatment was directed. This included the large number of persons who sought work in the growing auto industry.

As the automobile replaced America's reliance on the horse as a major method of transportation, workers came to this area from everywhere, but especially from the South. Since the economies of some of those places were in a period of stress, many poor whites as well as blacks were vulnerable to the lures laid by the moguls. Washtenaw County and Ypsilanti became home to many. The city population, however, showed a decline in 1930 (10,143) from 1920 (12,000), according to the city directories of 1920 and 1932. The "colored" population for 1930 was estimated to be 15 percent of the total.

Since many white Southerners brought their long entrenched prejudices with them, taught to them from birth, and the blacks brought memories of resentments honed over generations of deprivation and discrimination, there was certain to be conflicts between the two groups.

On the job, whites had the definite advantage, since they could expect to advance, not only by ability, but also because of color. Blacks, unaccustomed to even the privileges of resisting, were not long in developing techniques for their protection and survival.

A story is related about an incident which developed when some white Michigan Normal students were seen leaving the office of Dr. Dickerson, located across the street from the high school. Resentment was voiced by some local citizens, but the local Ku Klux Klan threatened to set fire to the office on Halloween Night. A local group of blacks, tired of such threats, decided to fight back. Under the leadership of the Reverend Garther Roberson, and William Paul Clay, they fortified themselves with their own artillery around the home and hospital of Dr. Dickerson. The Klan did march but nowhere near the place they had threatened. No more was ever heard of the incident. The next day, however, a black employee of a downtown store reported seeing a "sheet and hood" draped over a chair in the basement when he went to work the next day.

Chapter Twelve

"Noteworthy Individuals: Early 1900s"

There were some individuals who stood out during the early part of the century, some for their willingness to speak out on the issues, and some simply because of the positions of influence they held. In both cases they influenced the development of an environment which was even then growing to be the city we now know. As we study them, we can understand the present time.

A GIFT FROM ALABAMA:
THE REVEREND GARTHER ROBERSON

The Reverend Garther Roberson made a major impact upon Ypsilanti. His reason for abruptly leaving his native Alabama, as related by one of his sons, Garther, was a matter of "cheating by Mr. Howard," on whose farm Roberson worked as a sharecropper. After facing up to Howard, he "threw a few clothes in a bag and headed for Michigan." There a relative provided lodging while he went job hunting. A skilled cook, he eventually went to work for Central Specialty Company, and worked there for the next 20 years.

Shortly after his arrival, he joined Second Baptist Church. Within a few days he sent for his wife, Ella, and their two children. Once settled, he became active in the choir and Sunday School of the Church. Garther soon became a deacon and was later ordained into the ministry.

Accepting an offer from the Reverend William Shaw of First Baptist Church, he was tutored in reading and other basic subjects. This action seemed to fit the character of the man who always had an innate desire to reach his highest potential. In 1934, he was offered the pastorate of Second Baptist, and thanks to his own foresight, he was ready. "He was esteemed by members and friends in many areas, and showed a sincere concern for the welfare of people in need." This was probably his strongest asset, his son, Garther, relates. Even today he is remembered by many of the older citizens for his willingness to help young folks in trouble.

He worked closely with Judge James R. Breakey to save many first offenders from long jail sentences. As a community leader, his recommendations for employment were sought by employers. He also used his contacts to improve conditions among black Americans of the city. It is said that a luncheon meeting with Judge Breakey and the Reverend Shaw not only eased some tensions, but also caused some jobs to open up. He was a strong supporter of the NAACP, and an advocate of its objectives.

Before his death in 1955, he had earned a place of honor, not only as a church leader, but also as a caring community leader.

A tribute to the Reverend Roberson is the leadership roles played by two of his sons, S. L., the Pastor of Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church, and Garther, Jr., the Pastor of Mount Olive Baptist Church, both of Ypsilanti. They admit to a very strong influence from both parents as they keep the family credo alive.

There were a total of six children in the Roberson family. Walter also went into the ministry. Harold became a missionary. The two sisters are Evelyn and Garthonia.

AMOS WASHINGTON:
FROM OKLAHOMA

Among the many persons arriving in Ypsilanti during the second quarter of the twentieth century was a man with roots in "The Sooner State."

Amos Washington graduated from Lincoln University of Missouri in 1927. A native of Bristow, OK, he was born on January 25, 1900. He taught two years in an elementary school in Oklahoma before moving to Western University, an AME school located in the Quindaro community of Kansas City, Kansas. He then worked as a critic teacher for a short period in the the Laboratory School of his alma mater.

Washington was married in 1924 to Tommie Yarbrough, at Newby, OK. He enrolled at the University of Michigan to seek a graduate degree but lived in Ypsilanti. Following receipt of the Masters Degree, he served from 1936 to 1942 as educational advisor for the U. S. Office of Education, at Manistee, MI. During the booming housing emergency of the World War II, years, he managed projects at Ecorse, River Rouge, and Inkster. Returning to Ypsilanti, he served on the City Council, and later as administrator of the Housing Commission.

He was active in Second Baptist Church,

the Ypsilanti Chapter of the NAACP, and with Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity. In April, 1956, he was appointed to the unexpired term of Dr. Lawrence Perry on the School Board. In the fall election he won a full four year term. After serving a period as board treasurer, he was elected by the board to be Vice-Chairman, and later, to the Chairmanship. Washington operated a grocery store and meat market on Hamilton and Harriet streets for a number of years. With his friend, Andrew Smith, a local electrician, a park was created south of Harriet Street, and was immediately dubbed by friends as the "Amos and Andy Park."

His death in 1967 left a void in Ypsilanti's leadership. A daughter, Ometha Washington Smith, is an active community and church leader, currently belonging to Community Church of God. Another daughter is Beverly Washington James, also of Ypsilanti. His widow, Tommie, lives on East Ainsworth Street. A grand daughter, Tulani Smith, is Principal of Chapelle Elementary School. A grandson, Harry Smith, also lives in the area.

DR. LAWRENCE PERRY:
DENTAL SURGEON

Ypsilanti's first African American dentist of record was Dr. Lawrence C. Perry, another migrant from Alabama. Born on July 30, 1898, he went on to Wayne State University, from which he received the Doctor of Dental Surgery degree in 1924.

After setting up practice in Ypsilanti, he met and married Lillian Bass, a native of the city. He was almost immediately immersed in community activities. As a veteran of World War I, he served as Commander of American Legion Post 408. He was active with the Youth Council of the Ypsilanti Branch of the NAACP. He was also active with the Boy Scouts and the new Boys Club of Ypsilanti. In 1942, Dr.Perry became the first African American to be elected to the Board of Education. In his honor the Youth Council held a well attended "Victory Banquet" in the Harriet School Gymnasium.

Congratulations were extended by E. H. Chapelle, Superintendent of Public Schools; the Reverend Horace White of Detroit; Allen Strachan of the UAW-CIO; Mrs. Roscoe Huston of Ann Arbor; Douglas Williams of Ann Arbor; NAACP President Herbert Francois; and Herbert Walker, Youth Council President.

Before his death Perry served the board as treasurer and Vice-President.

The Perrys had four children: Winifred P. Wilson, Donna P. Sharp, Lawrence II, and Lowell.

On April 13, 1956, Dr. Perry's suicide because of cancer left the entire city in mourning. The City Council's Resolution stated:

"The City of Ypsilanti again suffered the loss of a very loyal and outstanding public servant." In his honor the Board of Education changed the name of Harriet School to Perry School. Later, in order to accomplish desired integration of schools, the name was again changed to Perry Child Development Center. With an additional wing, it now serves children throughout the Ypsilanti School District.

FROM THE "SHOW-ME STATE": JOHN H. BURTON

"Ypsilanti is a better community because of your caring for your fellow men," Mayor Clyde King recently stated about John H. Burton.

This native St. Louisan (Missouri) was born on July 10, 1910, and attended public schools and Stowe Teachers College in that city.

He came to Ypsilanti to work in the automobile industry in 1935. His abilities as an organizer soon caught the attention of union officials and he became a union employee. He was so effective that in 1936 he was named to the staff of Walter Reuther. From the beginning Burton was an outspoken advocate for the rights of all Americans. In 1945 he was elected to the Ypsilanti City Council and, with the exception of one term, served continuously for 18 years. In 1967 he became the first person of African descent to be elected mayor of a Michigan city. He served in that office for two years, during which time he continued a creditable record.

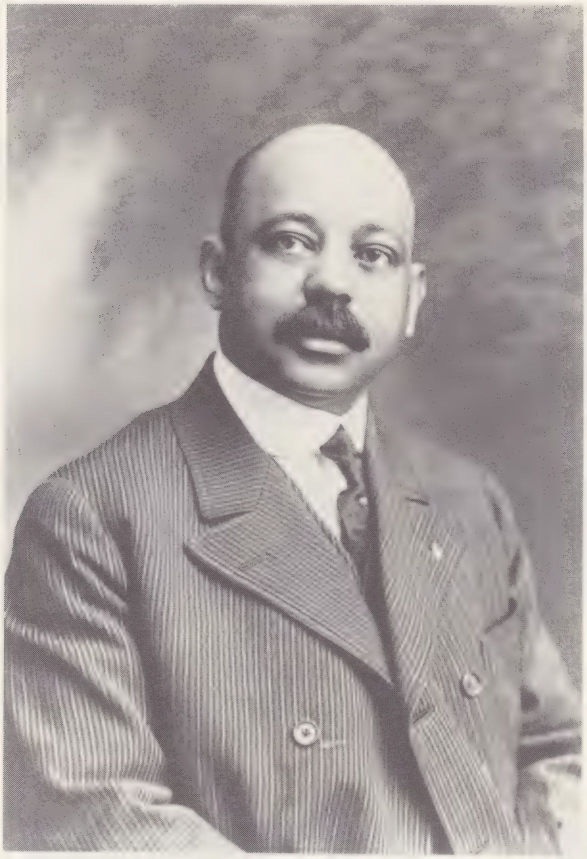
Burton's administration saw Ypsilanti's first public housing program. He strongly supported the establishment of the Human

George D. Goodman
Councilman 1971-73
Mayor 1973-83

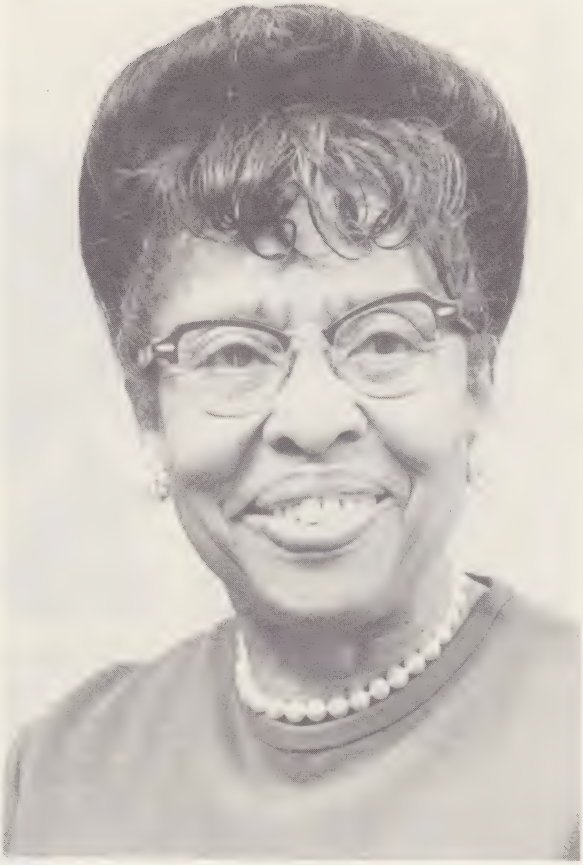
Matt Hennessee
City Manager
1984-88

Albert A. Robinson
Councilman 1982-

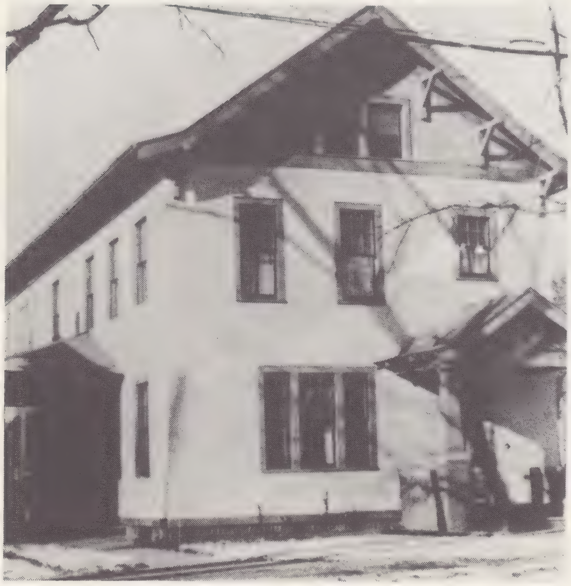
Eula Booker Tate and family. She served on Council, 1984-91. With her family (l. to r.) front: daughter Jennifer, Tate, son Stephen; back: son Donald, husband Ronnie, son Ronald.



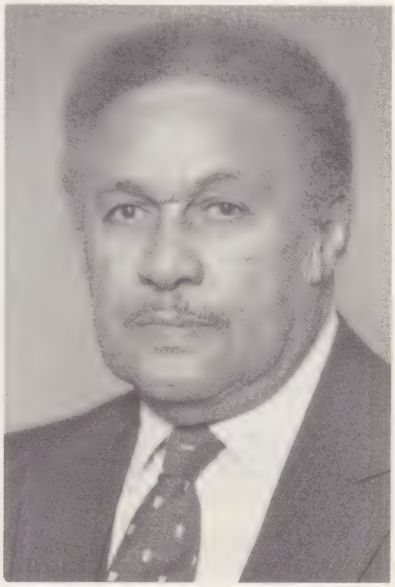
DR. JOHN DICKERSON came to Ypsilanti about 1902, serving until his death in 1929. Eventually granted staff membership at St. Joseph Hospital.



MATTIE L. DORSEY, first African American woman to serve on City Council (1973-1977. She was also an active opponent of Housing Authority Methods in the 1960s.



HOSPITAL OF DR. JOHN DICKERSON, located on North Washington St., next door to his residence. He died in 1929.



John H. Burton
Councilman 1947-69
Mayor 1967-1969

Relations Commission while he was a member of Council. Meanwhile he encouraged a group of citizens, led by Dr. Thomas J. Bass, to seek federal funds for privately-owned rental housing, which resulted in the Parkview Housing Project now located on Hamilton, south of Harriet Street.

Because of his stature and political savvy, he counted among his friends public officials and labor leaders on all levels of government. Before retiring in 1975, he served as a delegate to Democratic Party conventions on both state and national levels. Locally he was President of the Ypsilanti-Ann Arbor Business and Professional League, during which time a drive to select Ypsilanti's first black police chief culminating in the appointment by the City Manager, with the approval of City Council, of Jimmy Moore, as Chief of police. Moore filled the position for several years before leaving the office. Burton's advice and counsel was sought by labor and political leaders within and without the state.

In 1985, Burton was appointed to the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents where he served two terms as the Board's president.

On John and Willie Burton's 51st wedding anniversary, a testimonial dinner at $50 per person was sponsored by their friends to establish a scholarship in their honor at EMU, where he served so dilligently.

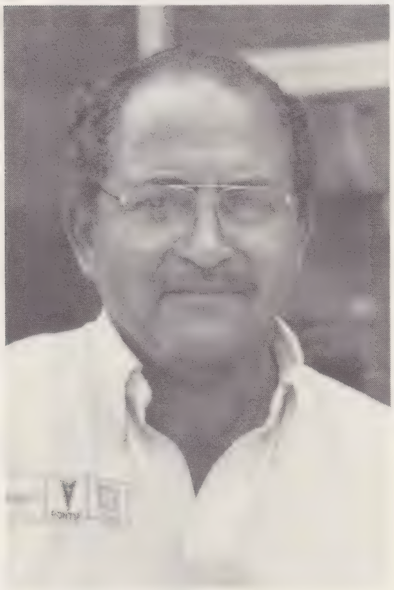
John H. Burton died on January 30, 1992. In attendance at his rites, held at

Second Baptist Church, were people from all walks of life, including his colleagues and fellow union workers, and political and governmental leaders.

VANZETTI MORRIS HAMILTON, ESQUIRE

Ypsilanti's second black resident attorney of record was born in Detroit on August 19, 1927, fourth child of George E. and Sarah Shuford Hamilton. The name "Vanzetti" was a tribute to one of the political extremists charged with murder in Massachusetts in the 1920s. Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti were believed by many people to be innocent, and their names represented a distrust of the system which prosecuted them. They were executed just three days before Vanzetti's birth.

The family moved to Ypsilanti in 1936, and "Van" graduated from Ypsilanti High School in 1945. He matriculated at Michigan State Normal College, finishing in 1949, following which he taught history, civics, and English at Edmonson Junior High for five years. Meanwhile he received the masters degree from the University of Michigan in 1953. Though he planned to enroll in the Law School at Ann Arbor, the quota system, which was in operation at the time, worked against him. In 1954 he applied and was admitted to Wayne State University, receiving his law degree in 1957. He put off immediate entry into practice while employed by the State as a Drivers License Administrator in Detroit.

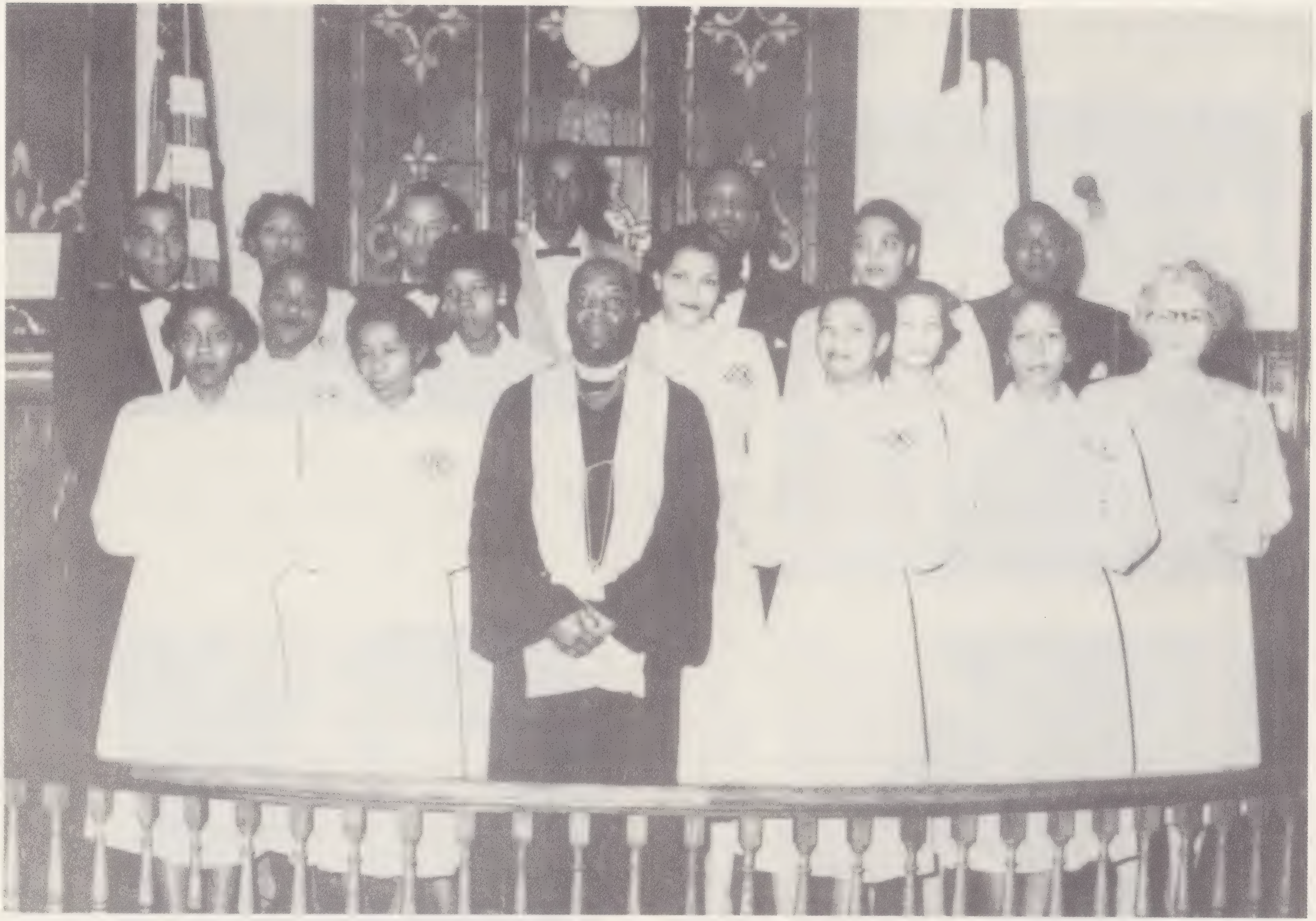


DOUGLAS HARRIS,
City Councilman, 1978-1982.

AMOS WASHINGTON, Civil rights activist, Councilman 1947-1951, School Board Chairman, Housing Administrator, business man.

WILLIAM P. CLAY, JR., City Councilman, 1974-1978.

JEROME STRONG, City Councilman, 1979-1981.



BROWN CHAPEL A. M. E. CHURCH USHER BOARD. Pastor Thomas H. Smith served the church, 1949–1956, and inaugurated the annual Brotherhood Banquet in 1953. 1st row (l. to r.): Earlie Mae Woods, Anna Holmes, Pastor Smith, Estelle Lowe, Betty Wilson; 2d row: Louis Whisenant, Bessie Newton, Jessie Marie Williams, Edessa Williams, Lucile Wilson, Vivian Morris; 3d row: Sara Woods Porter, Hayes Pegue, James Moore, Willie Williams, Louise Bass, Fred Woods.

Meanwhile he married Arbra Jean Fullerton of Battle Creek, on August 16, 1952. The two had met while she was attending Cleary College. As a high school student, "Van" won a declamation contest, using "Patrick Henry's Speech of March 3, 1775." As a result of such demonstrations of ability, he was urged to study law by none other than Judge James Breakey. Attorney Booker Williams, an African American lawyer recently established in the city, and several others, also encouraged. He always felt that his father may have preordained his vocational interest by the selection of the name of a poor man who had no means to defend himself. In 1958, "I hung out my shingle at 31 North Washington Street."

That same year he was appointed a charter member of the Ypsilanti Human Relations Commission. The Ypsilanti Press of July 15, 1964, announced his candidacy for Washtenaw County Prosecuting Attorney, a position he had sought years earlier. On June 4,1965, the newspaper announced his election to the Chairmanship of the City Democratic Party. On February 22, 1965, the paper noted his acceptance of a position as a director of the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce. Meantime, he became a member of the City,County and State Bar associations, the Prince Hall Masonic Order, and the City's Manpower Development Committee. He also joined the Emanon Club. In every way possible his concern for the common man was shown. In fact, his dedication to that cause sometimes overshadowed the importance of making a living. A part of his enthusisiasm for helping his fellow man went into his work with Second Baptist Church, where he regularly taught Sunday School, but he also served as a Deacon and Treasurer. He was an active member and two term President of the EMU Alumni Association. He joined the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor Business and Professional League, and served several terms as President. He was elected to the Board of Trustees of Washtenaw Community College. He was a founding board member of the Parkview Housing Project.

The law firm was expanded to Hamilton, McDonald, and later, Hamilton, McDonald, & Simpson. Meanwhile, Vanzetti and Arbra became parents to three sons - Mark S., Lawrennce W., and John E., and a daughter, Laura J.

His unexpected death on January 29, 1991 left a void in the community to which he contributed so much.

THOMAS J.AND LOUISE LANE BASS: "IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH"

Thomas Jefferson and Louise Lane Bass are good examples of "working together" for the good of community. Because they gave so freely over the years, hundreds attended their "retirement party" to express their gratitude to this couple.

Thomas J. Bass was born in Paterson, NJ, on September 14, 1910. After completing public schools in that city, he attended and graduated from Lincoln University of

Pennsylvania. He then entered Meharry Medical College, Nashville, TN, where he received the Doctor of Medicine degree in 1938. He interned at Freedmen's Hospital, Washington, D. C., and did a "fill-in" at his alma mater. He then served three years at Sumby Hospital, River Rouge, MI. Wishing to sharpen his skills in a specialty, he enrolled in the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan. Specializing in venereal diseases, he hoped for an assignment to a government hospital. Meanwhile, he opened a temporary office in the Public Housing Project of Ypsilanti, holding office about an hour each evening.

He soon learned that the prejudice that existed in the school as well as within the government would prevent such an appointment to an African American. At that point Dr. Samuel Ford Clark's deteriorating health became an issue, causing him to decide to stay in this community.

Meanwhile, Dr. Bass had met his future wife, Louise Lane, a native of Malvern, AR, who had come to study at the University of Michigan. Since the age of ten, she had lived in Dayton, OH, and attended public schools there. She graduated from Hampton Institute, in Virginia, following which she taught at Huntington High School. While in school here she worked for the Physicists Research Company (later Micro Metrical Company).

After their marriage on May 13, 1944, their interests in their adopted community began to show. Dr. Bass was active in the

Boy Scout movement, while Mrs. Bass became involved with the Girl Scouts. Both joined and became active with Brown Chapel A. M. E Church. Noting that there was a vacuum in activities for girls, the Bass home was opened to many in the community. The NAACP, then under the leadership of a small number pf people, including Herbert Francois, Douglas Harris, William Paul Clay, and Paul Wasson, and a few others, became a major activity of the Bass family. When the Human Rights Commission was appointed, Dr. Bass was a charter member. "This turned out to be a white-washing organization," he would say later. Dr. Bass' service as President of the NAACP, and as chairman of several of its committees, was significant.

Not all medical privileges were readily available to Dr. Bass. Some white doctors were slow to welcome him, and sending black patients to local hospitals did not always meet with approval. Because he fought those practices, with some support from a few white colleagues, the climate began to improve. The NAACP played a major role in righting the problem.

Perhaps one of Dr. Bass' greatest accomplishments was the Parkview Housing Project. Beginning in 1967, he started talking to key people, including Mayor John Burton, about providing housing for new persons in the community. Though not classified as low income, many needed temporary housing. Several trips were made to Detroit to confer with regional housing officials. Provisions in federal legislation allowed one hundred percent funding if other requirements were met. It was finally decided that if the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor Business and Professional League would join with Brown Chapel A. M. E. Church as sponsors, the project could be approved. Brown Chapel officials, assured that the church would not be liable, approved the arrangement. The project has proved a welcome addition to the city. Dr. Bass is the only board chairman the project has ever had.

Louise Bass, meanwhile, was instrumental in the affiliation of several local clubs into the Ypsilanti Association of Women's Clubs. This group in turn became affiliated with the Michigan Association of Colored Women's Clubs, which in turn is an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs. She spearheaded the acquisition of the "Club House" on south Washington Street.

Following her retirement as a teacher in the Ypsilanti Public Schools, Mrs. Bass began using her skills to tutor children with special weaknesses. She was stymied in this project by an illness which eventually took her life.

The two Basses related an activity of the local chapter of the NAACP, upon news of the murder of the two young black girls at a church in Alabama. "A protest march of about 100 people left Brown Chapel, went up Washington Street, then through the entire downtown area." Churches which had been inactive in the civil rights movement took up money to contribute to the Martin

Luther King, Jr. movement. He also related how, when Amos Washington was the top vote getter in the Council election, the custom of elevating that person to the mayorship was sidestepped.

The Basses are quite proud of their three children: Michael Thomas, born in 1945, was a well known football star at the University of Michigan, and in professional play; Ann Elizabeth, born in 1947, has been a dancer, but now is an educational consultant; Leah Louise, born in 1954, also an accomplished dancer, works in the school system of Los Angeles, CA. Since the death of Mrs. Bass in mid-1992, Dr. Bass lives quietly in retirement.

SAMUEL FORD CLARK, M.D

It was 1938 when Dr. Samuel Ford Clark brought his practice to Ypsilanti from the State of Arkansas. A graduate of Philander Smith College, Little Rock, AR, and of Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN, he was a native of Liberia in West Africa. He had to delay his plans when he volunservice during World War I. Assigned to Fort Chaffee in Arkansas, he was never assigned the opportunity to use his medical training officially, but was assigned as a mail man to his unit. During the influenza epidemic, he sometimes bragged that he "never lost a patient," referring of course to the soldiers he treated unofficially.

On December 9, 1919, he married a young teacher he met while attending the college there. She was Hattie Crawford, a native of Little Rock. He set up practice when the war ended, but several years later became interested in moving his practice to the City of Pontiac, in Michigan.

According to his son, Leo, on his way to Pontiac he stopped for a traffic signal in downtown Ypsilanti. He fell asleep. It was suggested by a policeman on duty that he spend the night at the Starks home on Buffalo. By morning he had been convinced that this place was worth considering. He returned to Little Rock to get his family. They moved here in July, 1938.

Since there had been no resident doctor after the death of Dr. Dickerson in 1929, the people took to the Clarks immediately. They became active in community work, and until his death was an important entity in the Ypsilanti community. Their daughter, Clamah Cory Clark, enrolled at Michgan State Normal where she majored in physical education. Samuel Clark, was born in 1923, and Leo Crawford in 1930, both in Little Rock, AR. Before her retirement, Clamah was an official in the Flint Public Schools until her retirement. Leo, who succeeded Eugene Beatty as Principal of Perry School, is now Principal of the Perry Child Development Center.

A "TAR HEEL" IN YPSILANTI:
THE CHARLES E. (CHIEF) BEATTY STORY

"It was almost a fluke that I went to Michigan Normal College. I had already decided to accept Northwestern University's scholarship offer. Offers from three major universities were considered, but I liked Northwestern over Michigan State and the University of Michigan. I had participated in track meets at each place and got to know the coaches and something about their athletic programs.

"Fate determined that I would enroll at Michigan Normal. I wanted to have a little cash to take to college, since the scholarship did not cover everything. I needed some spending money. So during the summer after graduating from Northeastern High in Detroit, I got a job working at Ford Motor Company foundry. I figured I would work until the end of the second semester in January. But the job ran out just after the beginning of the fall term. I contacted Northwestern, only to be told that freshmen orientation was over and that I should report at the start of the second semester".

These words by Charles Eugene Beatty, Sr. help to picture his early life in Ypsilanti. Though Michigan Normal had actively recruited him, he had not even returned the application forms. The registrar, C. P. Steinly, had to call the high school principal to determine his eligibility. He was allowed to enroll conditionally until his credentials came.

Once at the Ypsilanti college, Beatty

came under the influence of Coach Lloyd W. Olds. "After a semester with him I decided to cast my lot with this school and forget Evanston." Thus, Michigan Normal and the City of Ypsilanti became the beneficiaries of Beatty's athletic abilities, his love for children, and his concern for the welfare of a locality.

A native of Asheville, NC, Beatty was born on April 24, 1909, the second son and fourth child of Monroe and Nellie Orr Beatty. His mother died when he was seven, but she "had worked to establish within me a strong desire to achieve. His father showed love in many ways, but was a strict disciplinarian. Gene learned to work around the house, helping his father "keep up with chores." His first formal education was at the Methodist Allen Home School.

Enrollment soon grew beyond that school's capacity, causing attendance to be limited to girls only. So the next year Gene transferred to Steven Lee High School. After one year there, he again transferred to a Presbyterian high school.

Upon the death of his father, he was sent to Detroit to live with an older sister and her husband, Esther and Benjamin O'Donnell. There he was enrolled in the seventh grade at Miller Intermediate School

Physical education classes were held outside when the weather was suitable. When these classes were over, the students would line up to race to the showers. The teacher noticed that his new student was consistently beating the "fastest" boy in the school. This led the teacher to present Gene to the track coach, who asked if he had ever been in a track meet. The answer was "no."

"Well, come out for track practice after school today," the coach said.

There was a large crowd of students already on the field to watch this "new kid" compete against Fred Calloway. When their star was beaten three times the coach was impressed.

Meantime, as Gene saw other boys running and jumping, he decided to investigate. After all, he had never seen hurdles in Asheville. The first few times he knocked too many down. One of the students, Alfred Harvey, offered a friendly suggestion. Gene accepted. Harvey showed him how to use his left arm to balance when his right leg was in the air, and vice versa. With this very important lesson, Gene was on his way to becoming a champion hurdler.

At the City Field Day that May, Gene entered three of the allowed events - the broad jump, the 100 yard dash, and the relay. He still felt unready for the hurdles. Miller students dominated and won the meet. These successes led him to meet Eddie Tolan, a student at Cass Tech.

At the Junior Olympics, a city wide meet held at Belle Isle, the two boys won their separate heats and were pitted against each other in the finals. Beatty beat Tolan, but only by a fraction of a second. They were allowed to repeat, but this time Tolan won by a fraction.

"That was the beginning of a life-long friendship," reflects Beatty. By 1927, Gene had begun to master the hurdles, and was participating in regional meets. At a

Midwestern Meet, held at the University of Michigan, he lost the 50 yard dash, but his coach allowed him to enter the half-mile race. He beat the champion, and heard the announcer say, "Gene Beatty has set a new world record for the half-mile at 2:01.

While at Northeastern Beatty not only held the record for the half mile, but also ran with the record-setting relay team for the half mile. His teammates were John Lewis, Charles Ecknovitch, and Love Snowden. A new record was set at Soldiers Field in Chicago.

The Northeastern team had been to the Drake Relays, but the Penn Relays remained a dream. Along with Red Simmons, Gene was allowed to enter the 400 meter hurdles at Penn. Permission was secured by the coach to practice at the University's Yost Field House. At the meet, Beatty won the race in 54.7 seconds. The following year, he won in 53.3 seconds. These victories provided an opportunity for the 1932 Olympic tryouts at Palo Alto, CA. There he did fine in his heats, and was included in the final race with other heat winners.

Three runners were to be selected from the four finalists. "I was doing fine when I hit the straightaway. I could see and hear someone ahead of me. I put on a burst of speed, caught up and passed him. But in the process I tipped the last hurdle. This threw me off balance. I fell when I was less than ten feet from the finish line.

"By the time I was up, the other three runners had passed me. I walked across the finish line as I had been taught to do."

While standing there feeling sorry for himself, a reporter from a Los Angeles newspaper asked, "Did you know that Glen Hardin ran in the wrong lane?"

"No," Gene answered.

"Well, he did," the reporter replied.

"Come with me and I will tell Mr. Brundage about it."

Brundage was the Amateur Athletic Union chairman, the organization responsible for the Olympic contests. It was soon determined that Hardin had indeed run in the wrong lane, and he was disqualified.

It was then decided that the two men, Beatty and Hardin, should rerun the race on the following day with the winner filling the third spot on the team. The next morning, however, Brundage had changed his mind and announced that Hardin would go to the Olympics. His explanation was that he had been told that Beatty had been helped to his feet by one of the coaches. When Brundage refused to consider any protests, the dreams of his being a participant in the 1932 Olympics were dashed.

Beatty returned to Ypsilanti undaunted. "There had been enough setbacks in my life to make me realize that 'there is no sweetness in victory without the taste of defeat.'" He buried himself in his studies in order to complete the objectives he had set.

Meanwhile, Gene had met Evelyn Douglas, then a music student at the University of Michigan. They were introduced at a track meet, and later worked together on a summer playground in Detroit. When her father realized that the two were serious, he is said to have remarked, "Look out for my daughter." Shortly after Gene graduated, and went to work as a fourth grade teacher at Harriet School, they were married on November 27, 1935. Meantime, Gene enrolled at the University of Michigan to pursue the masters degree.

In 1940, Beatty was appointed Principal of Harriet School, "a high point for the people of Ypsilanti" as well as for the Beattys. Most of the white teachers transferred out, though Wilma Byers and Gladys Whitmer asked to remain.

African Americans with him during that first year were Anna Harris, Gertrude Campbell Francois, Vida Vest, Olive Evans Kersey, Santee Brockman, Bernice Kersey, and Laura Mullins. "I tried to build a school staff second to none," he would say later.

Within a few years all the teachers either had earned masters degrees or were studying towards that objective. This made the Harriet School faculty the envy of other schools in the city.

Under Beatty, Harriet School became a kind of cultural center for the South Side. Musical and dramatic programs, community and social meetings - all were accommodated in the school building.

Beatty remembers with pride some of the school programs designed to acquaint his predominantly black student body and their parents with African American history and culture. In his collection of photographs, which he is proud to show, are pictures of exhibits, displays, visiting speakers, and dramatic presentations. He likes to reminisce over special opportunities presented to the community through Bernice Kersey and Olive Evans. Miss Kersey provided the music while Miss Evans directed. "They were a great team."

His students got broader experiences in dramatic presentations, since they could now play all the parts. Previously they were limited to such menial roles as maids, janitors, or stereotypical characters.

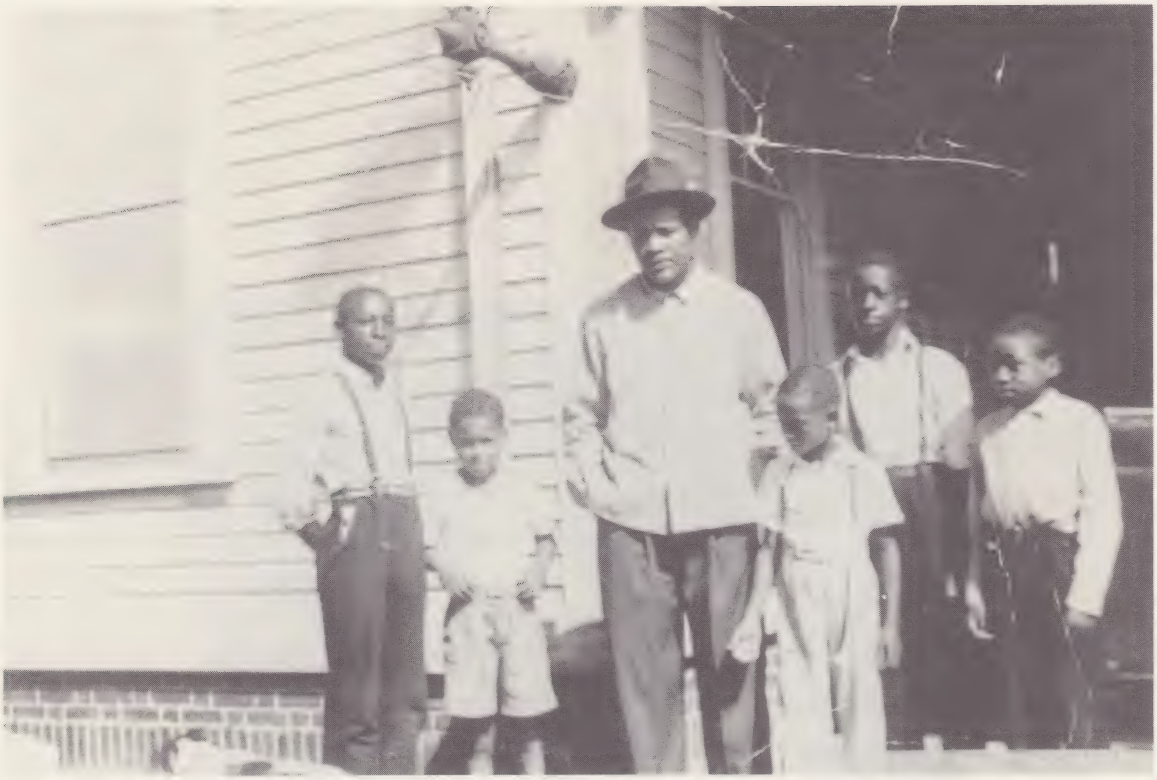
With a natural interest in sports, Beatty encouraged students to become active in physical programs. The school had provisions for basketball, while other sports were available in the nearby park. These had been available earlier but discrimination prevented African American students from fully participating.

Beatty had noticed that most students went no further than the sixth grade. In his first year as principal he started encouraging students to continue in high school. He began working seriously with those close to graduation in the customary sixth grade ceremonies. He kept track of them, always urging high school completion. Out of that first group, only two students failed to complete high school.

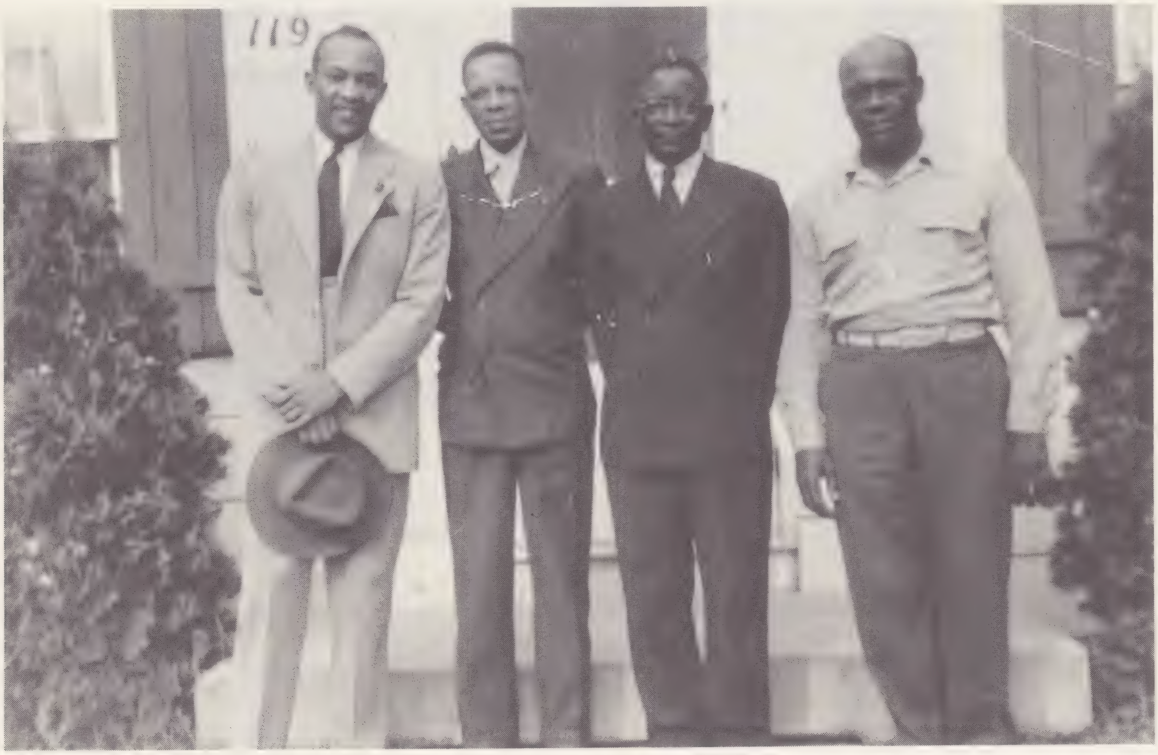
Gene and Evelyn married in 1935, taking a room with the Mahaleys on Harriet Street near the school.

The general housing situation for

CHARLES E. (CHIEF) AND EVELYN BEATTY in a recent pose.

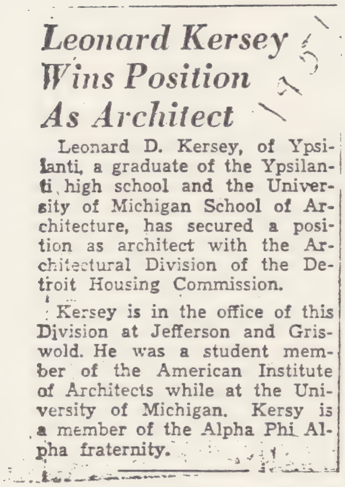


JOE LOUIS BARROW visited the city in 1938, and Charles Beatty took this picture of children with him. They are (l. to r,) Mickey Roberson, Lowell Perry, Lawrence Perry, Alex Roberson, and Bill Robinson.



Jesse Owens (l), came to visit an old friend, Gene Beatty (r), in 1942. Dr. Samuel F. Clark second from right.

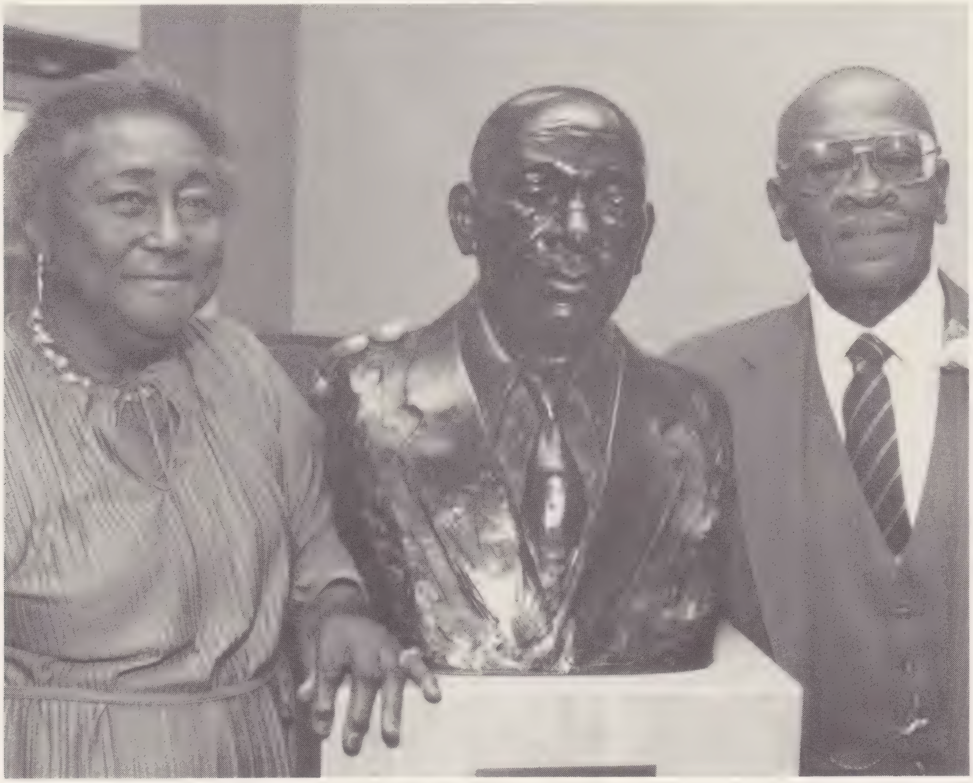
KATHLEEN ATKINS WILSON, a native Ypsilantian, is a popular artist of Los Angeles, CA



Leonard Kersey Wins Position As Architect

Leonard D. Kersey, of Ypsilanti, a graduate of the Ypsilanti high school and the University of Michigan School of Architecture, has secured a position as architect with the Architectural Division of the Detroit Housing Commission.

Kersey is in the office of this Division at Jefferson and Griswold. He was a student member of the American Institute of Architects while at the University of Michigan. Kersy is a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity.



A bust of Charles E. Beatty, Sr. was unveiled on October7, 1989. Mrs. Patsy Chandler started the fund through the Patsy Chandler Birthday Club. On the rig..t is Charles E. Beatty, Sr. Mrs. Chandler is on the left.

African Americans during that period has been described by Beatty as leaving much to be desired. When he purchased a lot on Hawkins Street in 1940, on which to build a home for his family, he was rebuffed in efforts to get financing to build a home. He discovered that the U. S. Federal Housing Administration (FHA) supported traditional discrimination. A special trip to Detroit confirmed that the agency would not approve any new housing for blacks south of Michigan Avenue. One officer suggested that if he could acquire land north of Michigan Avenue, such a loan would be possible. He reminded the person that to buy a lot there would be next to impossible. Neither of the two banks would even consider making a loan to him, even though he was now principal of an Ypsilanti school. A friend suggested that he talk to Harry Schafer, a local hardware dealer and a director of the bank.

Schafer referred him to Atwood McAndrew of First Savings and Loan. After listening to his problem, McAndrew visited the site. He told Beatty that if the property was free and clear, and if he could put up sixty percent of the cost of the house, the company would supply the balance.

Beatty did not have that kind of money, and knew that the amount was beyond his means. With a loan from the credit union, the house was begun on faith. This money was soon exhausted, however, but the house remained far from completion. Beatty went back to McAndrew and finally persuaded him to finance the completion of the house.

After some discussion, McAndrew agreed to advance the money, but only on condition that the size of the structure be reduced. Another compromise was reached with the contractor who would use the building as a "model home" to show others. When the home was completed, it was indeed a model for several homes constructed by that builder.

A Political awakening which took place on the South Side found Beatty always in support. He became involved in the election of an African American to the City Council in 1944-1945. This effort resulted in the election of Frank Seymour as the first black to ever serve on that body. On every Council since that time, there has been at least one African American from Ward 1 on the Council.

The next election opportunity saw John H. Burton and Amos Washington seated. These were the pioneers. Their contributions have been significant, many, and varied. Two of them went on to become mayors. One was the first African American in the State of Michigan to be so elected.

Meanwhile, a series of meetings took place under the name of " The Negro Business and Professional League." Beatty was one of the charter members. The name was later changed to Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor Business and Professional League. Before it went out of existence in the 1980s, this group was involved in several promotions which benefitted the South Side in particular, and the city in general.

An early project in which the League played an important and leading role was the fight to get streets on the South Side paved. Removal of unsightly outhouses, and the enforcement of codes was another successful project in which the League participated. The N. A. A. C. P. and the Palm Leaf Club were also supporters of these projects. Support also came from such individuals as Ben Neely, generally known as a loner who avoided joining formal groups. Neely was active on several projects to desegregate and to promote open accomodations.

As a public spirited person, Beatty remains a member of the original Board of Directors of the Parkview Housing Project. He was a founding board member of the Ypsilanti Boys Club, which recently merged with the Girls Club. He joined the Brown Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church when he first came to the city, and over the years served several terms as a Trustee. For more times than he can remember he has been Master of Ceremonies at the church's annual Brotherhood Banquet. Often he has sung with the Senior Choir. During the 1950s he was a member of the local draft board.

Beatty's civic and professional interests brought him countless citations and honors. He was elected to the State's Education Hall of Fame, the Athletic Hall of Fame, and the EMU Athletic Hall of Fame. His membership in Kappa Alpha

Psi Fraternity has provided opportunities for camaraderie, and also allowed him to counsel numerous young people in need of advice.

As one who helped to establish the Michigan Normal athletic Program, he has been honored several times by his alma mater. He served for several years on the Alumni Association Board, including two terms as President.

Concern for children who were having some difficulties with school led Beatty to establish a program at Perry School which provided extra help to students. When the success of this program came to the attention of others, it was copied, funded, and spread over this country and to many parts of the world.

In 1965, Beatty was named Principal of Central School. When that facility was closed, he became Principal of Chapelle School. He served there until his retire-retirement in 1974. At the banquet, honors came from hundreds of former students, faculty, other colleagues, and friends. This show of affection and respect has continued even until this day.

In retirement, he was elected to the Board of Education, going on to serve 12 years on that body. A "most proud moment was the election of Dr. James Hawkins" as the first African American Superintendent of Schools in Ypsilanti.

He enjoyed tremendously the many challenges which came before the Board during his tenure, though he was frustrated with the obvious racial insensitivity which flared often enough to hamper fair consideration of important problems.

The South Side community continued its admiration by rallying to the support of Mrs. Patsy Chandler's Birthday Club, which placed a bust of Beatty in the foyer of the new Perry Child Development Center.Thus his life-long concern for children was amply recognized.

Two of his proteges of whom he often speaks are: Leo Clark who succeeded him as Principal of Perry School; and Maude Odum Forbes, who served Fletcher School as Principal, and now serves in that capacity at Adams School. Athletes have always held an important place in Beatty's memories, and two who hold an esteemed place are Mike Bass and Lowell Perry.

Beatty and his wife, Evelyn, reared three children at their home on South Hawkins Street. Mary Louise Beatty Shorter, the mother of three, is a teacher in New Jersey. Charlotte Beatty Stigler, the mother of two, is employed in the Eastern Michigan University Records Department. Charles E. Beatty, Jr., the father of two, is a counselor at Ypsilanti High School. His wife, Evelyn, is a retiree from the Detroit Public School system.

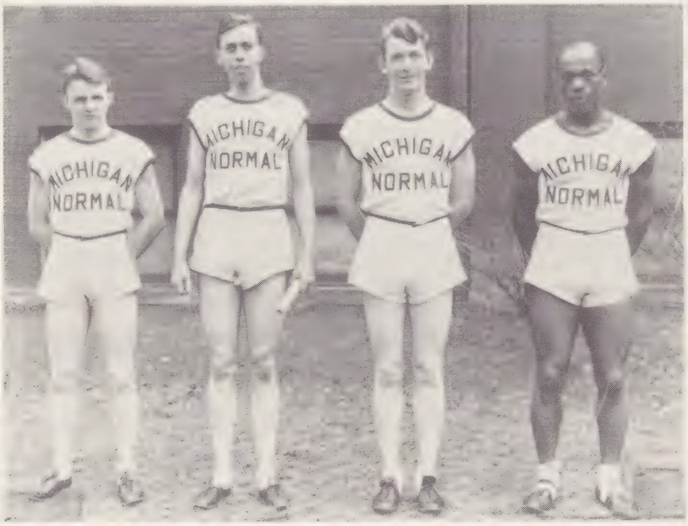
An ardent golfer for many years, "Chief" is no longer a "threat" on the course because of his physical problems.

Speaking of his years in Ypsilanti, Beatty says, "My interest in the students of Perry School brought me in contact with other kinds of needs. Sometimes it would be "a kid needing a new pair of shoes." At others, "it might be glasses," or "a winter coat," or just "a meal." On more than one occasion "I interceded to have coal or wood delivered to some family without the means to purchase." Many of those children, now adults, remember fondly the "acts of mercy" about which Beatty reflects.

Chief remembers a slogan which he saw many years ago in the Michigan State University Gymnasium, and which he adopted as his own:

> There is no limit to the amount
> of good a man can do if he does
> not mind who gets the credit.

The citizens of Ypsilanti continue to shower "roses" upon one whom they fondly have dubbed "The Chief," while he lives.



CHARLES E. BEATTY and the Michigan Normal Track Team of 1932. l. to r.: Merrill Hershey, Rha Arnold, Kenneth (Red) Simmons, Beatty.

INNOVATORS AT WORK: BARTECH AND THE JOHN BARFIELD FAMILY

Barfield Cleaning Company appeared on the Ypsilanti business scene at a most opportune time. The founders were not disturbed by rumors that blacks had been systematically excluded, or discouraged at the least, from business enterprises. So by a combination of personality and sheer will power, the Barfield family succeeded where others might have failed.

The motivation came when John Barfield realized that he could not support a family in the manner he desired on $1.75 per hour as a janitor at the University of Michigan. His wife, the former Betty Williams, agreed to cooperate with him and become a partner in a unique plan put forth by John.

The two arranged with relatives to sit with Young Jon, their first child, while Mom and Dad followed a plan to earn extra income. They offered their services to some of the faculty and staff on the campus to clean their houses on a periodic basis. If the work was not done satisfactorily, the pair would accept no pay.

Later they expanded their service by taking on the cleaning of newly constructed homes in the area before they were occupied by purchasers. Those were early steps in the structure of a successful and unusual business venture, particular by an African American family .

John Barfield was born on February 8, 1927, in Alabama. He dropped out of school in the ninth grade and arrived in Ypsilanti in 1941. The young teenager met attractive and vivacious Betty Williams, and they were married on July 7, 1949. Objections to her marriage at that time were based primarily on the fact that Betty had not completed high school. John promised that she would do so, and kept his word. She continued at Washtenaw Community College, studies which would benefit the couple as they expanded their ventures into the business world.

Aware of the opportunities before him, John was not the type to be deterred by a mere lack of a diploma. The part-time work consumed more and more time until it was providing more income than was the job at the University. He requested, and was reluctantly granted, a leave of absence. In 1954 Barfield Cleaning Company was formerly launched. The office was at 445 Second Avenue. John held the President of the new and fledgling company, while Betty became Vice- President and Treasurer.

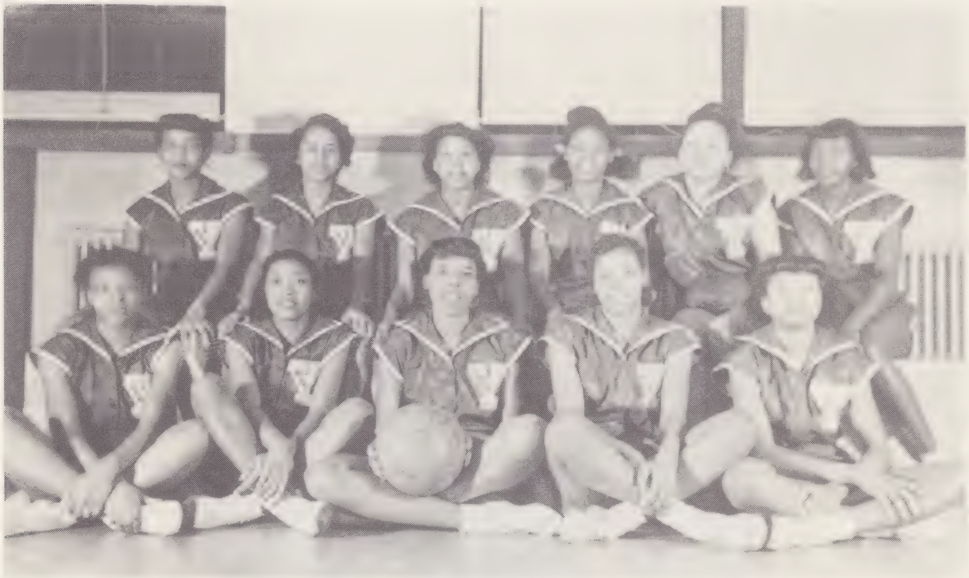
Meanwhile, demands for their services increased. On the suggestion of a friend, the decision was made to expand into a commercial service company. This led to the employment of other persons. A program of instruction was undertaken. As cleaning standards became more important, the two wrote and published a book - The Barfield Method of Building Maintenance. This book enjoyed a wide circulation.

The company now had contracts with several large business establishments from

JOHN W. BARFIELD, who directed the development of a cleaning business to an industry serving industrial andengineering plants. The latest venture is marketing plastic bags, with part of the income dedicated to housing programs for the poor. He serves as Chairman of the Negro College Fund in Washtenaw County.

MARY LOUISE FOLEY is the newest Council Representstive from Ward 1. An activist for many years, she served as President of the NAACP and the Palm Leaf Club.

FREDERICK GRADY upon his retirement is honored by fellow members of the Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union. His membership showed mid-century progress in Union recognition of African Americans.



THIS GIRL'S BASKETBALL TEAM competed with at least two other such teams at Perry School. This was a very important activity at mid-century. They are (l. to r.) front row: Mary McAdoo, unidentified, Katherine VanSlyke, Naomi Hill, Mary L. Neely Foley; 2d row: Carrie Madison, Jean Kersey Palmer, Delores Roberson, Lois Hill, Sylvia Vick, and unidentified.

Ann Arbor to Detroit. Recognitions came from the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce as other associations of business and civic activities. John was invited to become a founding member of the Building Service Contractors in 1965. He was elected to the board of directors. This also enhanced the circulation of their book.

John and Betty continued to work as a team. By 1969, the company's annual income had grown to $650,000, and 100 employees. That was the year International Telephone and Telegraph made an offer to purchase the company. The offer was accepted, but with the proviso that they would remain out of the cleaning business for five years.

John accepted some assignments from ITT as a consultant, but the inactivity was devastating to him. In 1976, the Barfield Maintenance Company was formed.

About one year later, the Barfields learned that General Motors had a need for draftsmen and designers on a per job basis. To service that need, a new service unit, Barfield and Associates was formed. The 65 staff members of this new company garnered an annual income of $2 million.

A 1978 contract with General Motors led to the formation of Barfield Manufacturing Company, bringing an additional $750,000 into the company. Now in the production of transmission pins, BARTECH, as a combined operation came into existence. The company was now able to expand its production of automotive fasteners which carried the initials, "BH, for Barfield and (Richard)

Hurdley, the plant manager, who owned 20 percent of the new company.

Barfield has always played down the minority aspects of his business. He has never sought special consideration because of his color. He does admit, however, that this may have been a factor along the way. He insists that "Making the most of opportunities has always been an objective in order to avoid tarnishing the reputations of other such firms in the process. "We want to be a company that both black and white citizens of Ypsilanti can be proud of. We're just trying to be the best little company in Michigan."

Success with GM prompted Ford Motor Company, Federal Mogul, and other firms to send business to BARTECH. The economy is constantly changing, and keeping abreast of change has always been a watchword of Barfield. The company has an annual income of well over $30 million. It was listed in Black Enterprise Magazine's "Top 100 Black Businesses" in 1990, as ranking twentieth in the nation.

A few years after Jon, their older son, completed studies at Princeton University and Harvard Law School, and following a stint with a prestigious legal firm in Chicago, IL, he returned home to work with and for his parents. He soon was made President of BARTECH.

The companies, with Father John serving as the Chairman of the Board, are almost constantly in the process of streamlining.

Subsidiary companies, such as Utility

Support Services, Inc. (USSI), and SHARE, Inc., are recently added titles of BARFIELD companies. Announcement of the latter made news because of the company's pledge to contribute one half the proceeds to major organizations concerned with housing for the poor. Products already announced for marketing include plastic bags and pop corn packages.

While Jon Barfield continues to serve as President, Angela Barfield is a Vice-President. Aaron remains an associate of the thriving company, and will possibly head up SHARE when it becomes fully operational. Bonnie Barfield, one of their daughters lives in El Paso, Texas. Lisa Barfield is currently struggling to regain her health from a recent illness. The youngest son, David Barfield, is employed by the Xerox Corporation. Their mother, Betty, recently retired from the business and is currently working with a number of community organizations. John's civic and community activities are many, and include the Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce, the Boy Scouts of America, the Ann Arbor branch of the United Negro College Fund, and the Ypsilanti Rotary Club. In 1981, a trust fund in honor of John's mother, was established with the United Negro College Fund.

Though John and Betty have moved their home to Ann Arbor, their business is still located on Lowell Street in Ypsilanti.

Chapter Thirteen

"At the Seat of Power: African Americans In Government"

We can only speculate on the reasons for the efforts of the 1940s to put African Americans on the Board of Aldermen. There was a national effort to knock down any vestiges of discrimination and segregation, and there were a scattered attempts over the country to become a part of the political structure. But the strength of drives on local levels varied from place to place. Ypsilanti's drive for full freedom accelerated faster than most.

The NAACP, under the legal guidance of Charles H. Houston, won two major cases before the U. S. Supreme Court in the 1930s, each of which held that states must provide equal education for all citizens. The Lloyd Gaines vs. the University of Missouri case, and the Ada Sipuel vs. the University of Oklahoma case held that "Negroes [in the absence of equal facilities] must be admitted to superior facilities."

In 1938, Crystal Bird Fauset was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. Four years later, in 1942, William L. Dawson went to Congress from Illinois. In 1944, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. became the first African American from the East to be elected to the U. S. House of Representatives. The Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s raised the consciences of all

PASSED BY COUNCIL ON APRIL 8, 1958

ARTICLE IV. COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS.

Sec. 13-14. Established.

There is hereby created and established a commission to be known as the human relations commission. (Ord. No. 183, 4-8-58, § 1.)

Sec. 13-15. Composition; compensation, appointment and terms of members.

Such commission shall consist of eleven members, to be appointed by the council. The members of the commission shall be residents of the city, they shall be broadly representative of the citizens of the city and they shall have exhibited an interest in human relations. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation. All appointments shall be for terms of three years. (Ord. No. 183, 4-8-58, § 2.)

Sec. 13-16. Meetings; appointment of chairman.

The human relations commission shall meet not less than once a month and shall adopt rules for the conduct of its business. The commission shall report these rules to the council. The commission shall appoint a chairman from among its members for a term of one year. The chairman may appoint such other commission officers and committees as the rules of the commission provide and are found necessary. (Ord. No. 183, 4-8-58, § 4.)

Sec. 13-17. Powers and duties.

The powers and duties of the human relations commission shall be:

(a) To promote mutual understanding and respect among all racial, religious and nationality groups and to discourage and prevent discriminatory practices against any such group in the fields of public accommodations, employment, housing, education and law enforcement;

(b) To disseminate information and educational materials and reports which will assist in the elimination of prejudice, intolerance, intergroup tensions and discriminations or which will promote good will and promote programs of community education and information with the object of promoting better human relations;

(c) To cooperate with governmental, educational, civic, community, business, labor and religious agencies and organizations in informational programs designed to increase mutual understanding among the many residents of the community;

(d) To aid in protecting the rights of all persons to enjoy public accommodations and facilities within the city;

(e) To recommend to the council measures aimed at improving human relations within the population and insuring the protection of any and all persons and groups from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin or ancestry;

(f) To receive grievances and to initiate its own investigations of discrimination against any person because of race, color, religion or national origin; to investigate and study grievances, problems and specific situations arising between groups or individuals which result or may result in tensions, discrimination, prejudice, in the city on account of race, color, creed, national origin or ancestry; such commission may hold public hearings for such purposes and may make public its findings; provided, however, that any public hearing held to consider a grievance shall be called only after the person aggrieved signs a sworn statement of charges;

(g) To prepare and submit quarterly and other reports to the council of its activities. (Ord. No. 183, 4-8-58, § 3.)

Sec. 13-18. Public hearings.

Public hearings for the purposes detailed in section 13-17 may be held by the commission after notice of such hearing has been published in a daily newspaper of general circulation in the city either by general news story or advertisement at least twenty-four hours prior to the time of hearing. (Ord. No. 183, 4-8-58, § 5.)

African Americans to the possibilities, and inspired them toward the development of their talents and abilities, while pushing to expand their opportunities. The war years, during which thousands of the young people of American ghettos offered their lives to preserve the democratic way of life, was perhaps the chief impetus behind the demand for entrance into the political arena all over the country.

Encouraged by progress elsewhere, the blacks of Ypsilanti began to shed any fears or reluctancies they may have had, as they sought relief from the oppression they had endured for so long.

The activities of some of their neighbors, such as Ben Neely, William Paul Clay, Sr., Herbert Francois, Sr., Paul Wasson, Doctors Lawrence Perry and Thomas J. Bass, Frank Seymour, and John Burton, were viewed as catalysts by many citizens. The election of Seymour as an Alderman in 1945, demonstrated the possibilities.

The giant, long asleep, was awake and flexing his muscles.

Such organizations as the Business and Professional Club, the Palm Leaf Club, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were all pushing for the same thing - recognition of human rights for all. Even the labor unions began to come over to the side of long downtrodden blacks.

Seymour served from April 1945 to April 1947, when he was succeeded by John Burton and Amos Washington. Burton was defeated the following year. Washington served until 1951 when he resigned. John Burton returned to the Board on April 10, 1950, and served until April, 1966. Reelected the following year, he was then elected by his colleagues to the office of Mayor, on March 10, 1967, and served through April, 1969.

George Donald Goodman began his term to City Council in 1970, and was elected by his fellow Councilmen to be mayor in 1972, by virtue of his being the highest vote getter. He won the office in a city-wide election in 1973, under a new charter, and won in each at-large election through 1982. He resigned on December 17, 1983, to become Director of the Michigan Municipal League, located in Ann Arbor.

The Mayor Pro-Tem office was held by John Burton from April 1955 to April 1957, and again from April 1959 to April 1960. William Paul Clay, Jr. served in the office from March 18, 1976 to April 11, 1977. The next African American to hold that office was John Bass, who served from April 3, 1978 to April 2, 1979. Douglas Harris was Mayor Pro-Tem from April 14, 1980 to April to April 13, 1981. Albert Robinson filled the position from April 11, 1982 to April 9, 1984. Eula Booker Tate became the first African American woman to hold the office, serving from April 14, 1986 to April 13, 1987.

That period saw several Americans of

African descent serving on appointed groups usually responsible to City Council. Burton was appointed by Mayor Maxe Obermeyer to the Liquor License Commission on April 17, 1962. He was assigned to the Salary and Wages Commission by the mayor on November 19, 1962. Mayor John Calder appointed him to the Fair Housing Ordinance Review Board on July 15, 1963. Mayor Vincent H. Buck assigned him to the Citizens Committee on Aging on October 1, 1964. He was Chairman of the Committee to Investigate Ford Lake while serving as mayor. His services were offered after his tenure as mayor. He was a member of the Building Authority from June 30, 1977 to September 19, 1977, when differences between him and other members caused his resignation.

Amos Washington served on the important Recreation Commission from April 1945 to May 1, 1949. He was a voting member of the City Planning Commission from May 28, 1947 to May 1, 1966. Other Council members were on various appointive committees, boards, commissions while in office as well as out.

There have been several appointive positions held by African Americans. Melvin Bass was appointed Property Standards Inspector on January 4, 1971, and then Chief Building Inspector on March 1, 1972. he served in the latter position until October 12, 1979, when he resigned. He served on the Building Code Board of Appeals from September 21, 1980 to September 29, 1981.

Charlie White was appointed Director of Public Works in September 1979, by Mayor Goodman. Regina Williams served as Director of Personnel from February 1976 to July 1979. Mary Herndon was Director of Public Housing from April 1973 to September 1980. Michael Wilson was City Planner from August 1978 to December 1979. Perrin Emanuel was Director of Economic Development from June 1980 to June 1986. Joseph Charlton was the Assistant City Manager from October 1979 to June 1981.

Jesse Rutherford served as Recreation Supervisor, and then as Director, from February 1945 until his death. Joyce Taylor Jordan has served as City Treasurer since 1991. Jimmie Moore was Chief of Police from December 1978 to March 1984. L. J. McKeown was appointed to the position of Chief of Police in July 1990, and confirmed by Council the following October.

The highest appointive administrative position was held by James W. M. Hennessee, who served as City Manager from May 7, 1984 to October 14, 1988, when he resigned to accept a position with the State of Oregon.

Ypsilanti led the way in the employment of African Americans in many key positions. The first recorded employee was John Hall, who was hired to head the Adams Street School in 1860. Classes were held in the "Colored Methodist Church" from 1860 to 1864, when William Isaac Burdine became the Principal. The building was completed just before the latter's arrival. When Burdine left several years later, administration of the school was assigned to the principal of Central High School. No other black principal is in evidence until the arrival in 1914 of Benjamin Harrison Locke. The school was closed in 1920. In 1940, Charles Eugene Beatty, Sr. became Principal of Harriet Street School. He was the first full time Principal of African descent in the City's history.

Dr. Lawrence Perry became a Trustee of Ypsilanti Public Schools in 1942. He was followed by Amos Washington, James D. Hall, Douglas Harris, Beatty, and Jinesse Dabney. Dabney was the second African American to serve as Board President. Amos Washington, was the first.

The Trustees appointed Dr. James Hawkins as the first person of color to serve as Superintendent in 1984. He served until 1990, when he was succeeded by Ralph Grimes, who as Assistant Superintendent, and former high school principal, had been acting Superintendent following Dr.Hawkin's sudden resignation.

The concern by Ypsilanti blacks over the absence of policemen of color resulted in the appointment of Al Hibbett to the force in the 1930s. True to the time, he reportedly was only allowed to arrest persons of African descent.

The struggle for equality of opportunity may be traced back to John Grinage, Sr., who knew the location of underground pipes and sewers so well that he was depended upon by Public Works officials to indicate where they were located. He is believed to have been the first black foreman in the system. Several dark skinned individuals were employed as lamplighters before electric street lights were in place. A few others were assigned menial positions, such as laborers, janitors, and cooks, but the responsible assignments had to await a more enlightened era.

Ronnie Peterson, an Ypsilanti native, won a position on the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners in 1986. He failed to keep the seat in 1990, but was elected again in 1992. Though others had served on that board in earlier days, his was the first publicly-elected black membership from the Ypsilanti area.

GEORGE DONALD GOODMAN: HONORABLE MAYOR

George Donald Goodman, the adopted son of George V. and Thelma Kaigler Goodman, was brought to Ypsilanti from Saginaw, his place of birth, at the age of fourteen months. He was born on September 13, 1940. His grandfather, John Goodman, migrated to Ypsilanti from Canada in 1880, and became a naturalized citizen four years later. Both his grandfather and great grandfather were slaves, but the former escaped to Canada and freedom. As a laborer, he was employed by the contractors who built the water tower. His father worked for the Ford Motor Company for 37 years before retiring. His mother, Thelma Goodman, was born in Viana, Georgia.

Thelma's father was a baseball player "in the south," but his major occupation after moving to Michigan is thought to have been common labor. The family first lived in Ecorse, where Thelma worked for Crowleys Department store before deciding to move to Ypsilanti. After her marriage to George V. Goodman she became aware of the the poor treatment received by black women in local retail establishments,. and was encouraged by Beatrice Butler, a beautician and friend to enter the millinery business. Success in that venture led to the expansion of her business into variety of women's clothes sold from the basement of their home. A corsetier, Frankie Nelson, was employed, followed by three beauticians - Virginia Smith, Fanny Perry, and Charlene Davis. The manager was Daisy Saunders. Business was so good that they decided to build a shop.

The banks at first refused to lend money to a black company, but eventually the loan was granted. Moses Bass, Sr. and his sons built the store on the south side of Harriet Street, which was occupied in 1947.

The stocking of new merchandise, and the employment of professional salespeople made the business unique for its time. "We sold everything except shoes, and we even ordered them," Mrs. Goodman would write later. The building "consisted of a sewing room, fitting room, a spacious floor area, a large beauty salon, two large show windows, and a four-room apartment.

With the breakdown of segregation in the

1960s, and the rush by white entrepreneurs to accomodate black customers, the Goodman Fashion Center was closed.

Young George attended Roosevelt School at Eastern Michigan University, continuing there through the the College Department. During his growing up years, there were three persons he now remembers as sort of role models for him: the Reverend Thomas H. Smith of Brown Chapel, John Burton, and Dr. Lawrence Perry. He describes Smith as a "down to earth, practical, jovial, and very intelligent" man. Of John Burton he stated, "As far as influence was concerned, I watched Mr. Burton during my childhood, and he proved to be an astute politician." About Dr. Perry, "he was very articulate, outgoing, and intelligent. When he said something, it meant that he had given a lot of thought to it."

As a youth, George was active with the NAACP Youth Chapter. This group actively fought to integrate skating rinks, and for the removal of pictures from job and dormitory applications at EMU. In high school he served on the Student Council, and during his senior was president. He went out for in high school, but opted for ROTC at EMU, and was commissioned at graduatiion. He was also active with the Young Democrats, reflecting even then a leaning toward politics. He majored in political science, and minored in history and sociology. His girl friend during his senior year in high school was a fellow student, Judith Ann Mansfield, whom he married in 1962. She later taught in the Highland Park Liberty School, while they lived in EMU's Cornell Courts.

The couple then spent three years with the U. S. Army in Germany, where their first son, George Anthony was born. After Discharge in 1967, the family returned to Ypsilanti, where he taught the one year at University High. He was then employed as a counselor by EMU before going to work for the University of Michigan. Both Judith and George were involved with Youth for Understanding, reflecting their experiences as exchange students.

Mayor John Burton called George one night shortly after his return from Germany and asked if he would accept an appointment to the Human Relations Commission. He accepted, and served for two years, the second as chairman. Burton and several others suggested that he run for Council in 1969. He lost, but was successful on his second try the next year.

On Council, "Norman Kennedy (the other black councilman) and I lost on just about everything because the Republicans were solidly in charge....Even though I realized that I was going to be on the losing end I raised questions in the meetings. They tried to placate my inquisitiveness by giving me certain responsibilities. That's how I got to be Mayor Pro-Tem. After that some of the others on the Council started to give me more support. When Nathalie Edmunds got appointed to the Council, we ended up supporting each other's positions, even though she was a Republican."

At that point George had no thought of becoming mayor, believing more experience would be desirable. Fate, however, stepped in to determine otherwise.

Elected by his colleagues in 1972 to be mayor, and then elected under the new charter the following year, Goodman was reelected every two years through 1982.

He had several accomplishments during his ten years as mayor. One of the first was the authorization to build the "High Rise" for senior citizens on West Michigan. The Jesse Rutherford swimming pool project and the move of City Hall to downtown were also high points. The opportunity of being in the Mayor's chair, getting to meet many people, dealing with officials in the nation's capital, "the experiences I've had with the Michigan Municipal League have all been highlights during the years I've been in office."

In December 1983, Mayor Goodman gave his resignation in order to accept the the position of Director of the Michigan Municipal League, located in Ann Arbor.

Shortly thereafter the family moved to Ann Arbor. He had held the longest tenure as mayor than any other mayor in the City's history.

The two sons of the Goodmans are in the process of carving their own niches. George Anthony, following his graduation from Michigan State University, went to work for the Federal Government. He later married his high school sweetheart. Mark is currently enrolled in graduate school in a Boston university.

Ypsilanti still holds the Goodman family in high esteem.

INDEX

Adams Street School 74, 78, 97, 110
African Methodist Episcopal Church 9, 83, 111
African Methodist Episcopal Society of Ypsilanti 9, 11-12, 88
Africa Methodist Episcopal Zion Church 85
Allen, E. P. 63
Anderson, Al 63
Anderson, C. H. 57
Anderson Family 6
Aray, Jacob 4
Artist, R. H. 57
Balantine, David 11
Ballard, Arden H. 11
Band, Brass, Colored 89
Band, Colored 57
Band, Ypsilanti Union Cornet 58
Banion, William 9
Barfield, John, family 143-147
Barfield Cleaning Company 143
Barfield Manufacturing Co. 145
Barrett, Eldred 9
BARTECH, Inc. 145
Bass, John 150
Bass, Louise Lane 95, 97, 124-128
Bass, Melvin 151
Bass, Moses 113
Bass, Moses, Sr. 155
Bass, Dr. Thomas J. 97, 121 124-128, 149
Beatty, Charles Eugene, Sr. 130-142, 153
Belden, Aretus 7
Beverly, Davis 4
Black Hawk Indian War 10, 11
Blakeley, Charles 16, 34
Bow Family 112
Bow, Carrie M. Hayes 74
Bow, Edfert 51
Bow, Solomon 55, 56, 81
Bow, T. 57
Bow's Grocery 56, 60
Bowles, Louis Slater 73-74
Boxing School (1890) 73
Brainerd, J. 4
Breakey, James P. 116
Brockman, Santee 135
Brooks, J. W. (Pittsfield) 13
Brown, John (raid) 44
Brown, W. T. 57
Bryan, John 7
Bundy, Rev. Jason 90
Burdine, William Isaac 58, 89, 152
Burton, John H. 120-122, 149-150
Burton, Willie 121
Campbell Family 6
Carter, Viola Starks 74-75
Carter Family 6
Carver Community Center 93
Cazey, William 83-84
Census, Washtenaw County (1840) 8-9
Champion, Salmon P. 8
Chandler, Patsy 95, 141

Charleton, Joseph 151
Chase, Leonard, family 20
Christian, Rev. Robert L. 84
Churches, Black, (1865) 43
Church of God (Sanctified) 84
Church of God and Saints of Christ 84, 111
Church of God In Christ 87, 88
Civil War Volunteers (Black) 45-46
Clark, Clamah Cory 129
Clark, James 82
Clark, Leo 129
Clark, Dr. Samuel Ford 125, 128-129
Clarke, Lewis (Original George Harris) 52
Clay, William Paul 78-79, 97, 114, 149
Coffin, Levi 18
Colburn, Harvey C. 4, 11, 12
Collins, Benjamin 55
Community Church of God 85-87
Convention, Colored, County 59
Convention (1843) 13
Copeland, Allen A. 20
Cornwall, Mayor of City 63
Cross, Daniel 4
Curry, Jonalthan D. 65
Dabney, Jinesse 153
Davis, B. D., family 8
Davis, Daniel P. Grocery 60
Davis, Elder Fred 86-87
Davis, T. J. 154
Day, Wylie 81
DeBaptiste, George 18, 21
Dennis Family 80-81
Dexter Juvenile Band 63
Dickerson, Dr. John 82, 114
Duncn, William 55
Eaglin, Marguerite 876
Eaton, Earl 34, 16, 65
Eichlor, Ella 2, 3
Eichlor, William 2
Emancipation Proclamation 45
  1884 celebration 59
EMANON Club 95
Evangelistic Association (Colored, 1886) 59
Fair, Captain 3
First Ward School, See Adams Street School
Fleming, John 7
Foley, Mary Louise Neely 75 97
Follett, Benjamin 11
Follett, Nathan 59
Forsythe, John 7
Fox, John 59
Francois, Gertrude Campbell 135
Francois, Herbert 81, 97, 149
Fremont, John C. (votes for) 16
French, Silas 11
Fugitive Slave Act (1850) 22-23
Godfroy's Trading Post 3
Goodman, George A. 158
Goodman, George Donald 150, 154-159
Goodman, George V. 112

Goodman, Judith Ann Mansfield 154, 156-157
Goodman, Nark 158-159
Goodman, Thelma Kaigler 112, 154
Goodman Fashion Center 155-156
Gordon family 21-22
Gorton, Susie 58
Grant, Ulysses S. 53
Grant Clubs 54, 55, 88-09
Grant, Oronte 2
Green, John H. 112
Greene, D. 54
Griffin, Henry 20
Grimes, Ralph 153
Grinage, John, Sr. 153
Hackett, Calvin (of Jackson) 13
Half-Century Celebration, 1915 111-112
Hall, George 3
Hall, James D. Sr. 153
Hall, John W. 16, 34, 58, 65, 152
Hamilton, Vanzetti Morris 122-124
Hamilton, McDonald, Law firm 124
Hamilton, Elsie 20-22
Hamilton, Willis 20-22
Hamlin, S. C. 56
Harriet Street School 78
Harris, Anna 135
Harris, Douglas 150, 153
Hart, J. K. 55
Haviland, Laura Smith 18, 25
Hawkins, James E. 153
Hayda, Sr. Marie 27
Hayes, George 81
Hennessee, James W. M. 152
Henry, Rev. George C. 84
Hibbett, Al 153
Hicks, C 57
Holmes, Oliver Wendell 47
Hoyt, Othello P. 13
Hutchinson, James 8
Jackson, S. 55
Jacobs, H. P. (Natchez, MS) 63 83
Jefferson, Thomas (views) 14
Johnson, Henry 16, 34
Johnson, William 16, 34
Johnston, George 82
Jolly Men's Club 94
Jones, Sylus 9, 83
Jones, W. R. 57
Junior Palms 94
Jury (County) 55
Kennedy, Norman 157
Kentucky Wonders Club 94
Kersey, Bernice 110
Kersey, Olive Evans 135
King, Mayor Clyde K. 120
King, George 8
Knox, Elwood 81
Ku Klux Klan 114
Ladies Leap Year Club (1885) 59
Ladies' Lyceum 90, 91
Lane, Marcus 11
Larzelere, Jacob 8
Lightseekers Club 90
Lincoln, Abraham (death of) 47-49
Littlejohn, F. J. 14

Locke, Benjamin Harrison 110, 153
M'Honey, Charles (attorney) 78, 96
McAndrew, Atwood 137
McAndrew, William 20
McCoy, Anna 26, 82
McCoy, Elijah 56, 57, 65
McCoy and Hamlin 57
McCoy, George 16, 20, 24, 34
McCurdy, Patricia Neely 75
McIntyre, John C. 85
McKeown, L. J 152
McLean, T. W. 63
Mahaley's Beer Garden 81
Males, Black (1840 Census) 8
Manual of Freedmen's Progress 112
Marshall, Mayme 94
Mashat, Charles 65
Masons, Prince Hall 58
Masons, State Meeting of 59
Mass Meeting 52
Matthews, Luke 9
Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church 85
Michigan Association of Colored Women's Clubs 93
Michigan Constitution of 1837 12
Michigan Legislature 14
Michigan Municipal League 158
Michigan Mutual Benefit Society o Good Samaritans 62
Minstrel, Colored (1889) 60
Modernistic Club 94
Monroe, William (Detroit) 13
Monroe, Michigan 3
Moore, Jimmy (Police Chief) 121, 152
Moorman, Ruth 98
Morton, Eurotas, family 20
Morris, W. H. 57
Morton, Jonathan 7
Motaw, R. H. 57
Mount Olive Baptist Church 116
Mullins, Laura 135
Mullins, Raymond 97
Munday, William T. 85
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People 78, 96-98
Neely, Ben 149
Neely, Howard 75
Neely, Martha Starks 74-75
Neely, Willard 75
Newton, Isaac 81
Newton, Jesse 65
Norris, Justin 7, 20
Norris, Mark 6, 11
O'Bannon, Eugenia 94
Oekry, Nelson 13
"Old Black Sam" 6
Oltmanns, Richard 26
Osler, Lee 98
Palm Leaf Club 91-94, 149
Palm Leaf Club Tea 94
Pane, Alfred 9
Patchin, W. W. 20
Pattison, C. R. 43
Perrin, Emanuel 152
Perry, John 82
Perry, Dr. Lawrence C. 97, 118-120,

149, 153
Peterson, Ronnie 154
Pioneer Dramatic Club 94
Pittsfield Township 4
Plessy vs. Ferguson (1896) 73
Pony Tail Palms Club 94
Pope, Greenberry 65
Population, Black (1800) 32
Population, Black (1837) 31
Population, Black (1860) 35-41
Population, Black (1916) 94
Post, Samuel 17
Post, William R. 8
Powers, Isaac 8
Prescott family 20
Prince Hall Masons 58
Quakers 20
Raisin Institute, Adrian 20
Republican Party 16
Richards, Elder John 85, 52
Richardson, Joseph Henry 80
Richardson, Samuel Asa 79-82
Richerson Family 5
Roadman, T. S. 55
Roberson, Rev. Garther, Sr. 114, 115-117
Roberson, Rev. Garther, Jr. 116
Roberson, Rev. S. L. 85, 116
Robinson, Albert 150
Roper, Bill 81
Runaway Slave Act (1793) 22
Rutherford, Jesse 93, 152
St. John's Baptist Church 85
Sandusky, Ohio 2
Schafer, Harry 137
Second Baptist Churcb 83-84, 111, 115-116
Senior Palms Club 94
Sewing Circle Club 94
Seymour, Frank 149
Shaw, Rev. William 115
Shipman, William G. 56
Shorter, Mary Louise Beatty 141
Signal of Liberty (paper) 13
Silhouttes (Kappa Alpha Psi) 94
Skinner, Elias 8
Smith, Andrew 118
Smith, Rev. Bennie 97
Social Ten Club 94
Spencer, Grove 11
Spofford, Richard K. 16, 34
Starks, Harry 81
Starks, Vinson Nathaniel Family 74-75
Starkweather family 17
States Righters 10
Stewart, Mrs. Isaac 65
Stigler, Charlotte Beatty 141
Stiles, David 3
Stitt, Robert 4
Stockdale, John 8
Submissionists 10
Sumner, Charles 54
Sydes, Ruth 110
Tate, Eula Booker 150
Thayer, John 4
Thomas, E 57
Thompson, Flora 9, 83

Thompson, L 57
Tolliver, William 65
Travis, Sam 112
Treadwell, Timothy 11
Triple Entente 93
Trust, James 6
Truth, Sojourner 52
Tuttle, Hiram 2
Underground Railroad 7, 17-30
Underwood, Rev. Pleasant 16, 34
U. S. Census of 1830 6
U. S. Constitution. 14th Amendment 51
Van Buren, Martin 8
Vest. Vida 135
Vigilance Committee 11
Voorhees (Justice) 6
Walker, Minnie 85, 87
Washington, Amos 81, 117-118, 149, 151
Washington, Booker T. 71
Washington, Tommie Yarbrough 117
Washtenaw County 4, 7
Wasson, Paul 97, 149
Wells, Philip 97
Wells, Samuel 9
Wells, Sanford H. 16, 34, 54, 55, 56
Western Immigrant (paper) 10
Whigs Political Party 16
White, Elder Charles 86
White, Charlie 152
Wiard, Lyman 7
Williams, Regina 152
Wilson, Michael 152
Williams, Sr. R. 57
Willing Workers Club 91
Wise, Loleata 110
Women's Clyb House 93
Woodruff, Benjamin 2, 3, 4
Woodruff's Grove 3
Woodward, Judge Augustus Brevoort 4, 5
Young Adult Palms Club 94
Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor Business and Professional League 149
Ypsilanti Association of Women's Clubs 94
Ypsilanti Men's Metropolitan Glee Club (1888) 59
Ypsilanti Seventh Day Adventist Church 88
Ypsilantis, General Demetrius 5

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